COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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" The principal Council belonging to the King is his Privy Council, which is generally called, by way of " eminence, " *The Council.*" And this, according to Sir Edward Coke's description, is a *noble, honour-* " *able,* and *reverend* assembly, of the King and such as he wills to be of his Privy Council, in the King's " Court or Palace."——BLACKSTONE; Book I. Chap. I.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

MINISTERIAL DUEL.——" Set a beggar " on horse-back, and he'll ride to the " devil," is a proverb, the truth of which is daily apparent. From the scum of society, from the *casual fruition,* from the *spawn of itinerant vagrants,* one might have expected, that a long and bitter quarrel, about place and profit, would end in an attempt upon one another's lives; but, from the *great men of the realm;* from our ministers of state; from our law-givers; from the king's privy counsellors; from members of that " *noble, honourable,* and " *reverend* assembly;" from this description of persons, one might have expected something a little better than the popping off of pistols at each other's skulls.—— The base hirelings, who conduct the Morning Post and the Courier news-papers, have not, as yet, openly asserted, that this duel arose from the influence of *Jacobinism;* they have not yet openly asserted, that Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Wardle and Mr. Madocks were the cause of it; but, I shall be greatly surprized, if they do not, before they have done, make shift so to twist the matter as to make even this transaction appear to their beastly tribe of readers as having its origin in a Jacobin Plot; and that the actors themselves were perfectly innocent of any evil intention, and, at the time when they were cocking their eye at each others heads, felt *loyalty* bubbling up to their very throats; nay, that, as far as they were concerned, it was a mere rivalship in loyalty, that was the ground of their quarrel.——But, be this as it may, let us have the facts upon record, as those facts have been stated in the news-papers.——The fact of the Duel is stated as follows:—" We understand that " there was a meeting at Putney Heath, " this morning, between *Lord Castlereagh* " and *Mr. Canning.* Lord *Yarmouth* ac- " companied the former to the field—*Mr.* " *Ellis* the latter. After taking their " ground, they fired by signal, and missed; " and no explanation taking place, they " fired at each other a second time, when " the ball from Lord Castlereagh's pistol " went through Mr. Canning's thigh, on " the outer side of the bone. Thus the " affair terminated.—Mr. Canning's wound " is not considered to be dangerous.—The " cause of this extraordinary affair is said " to have originated in some official mis- " understanding, the nature of which we " shall not enter into at present, as we are " greatly deficient in information upon the " subject; and in a matter of such *extreme* " *delicacy,* we think it our duty to avoid " hazarding any statements which we do " not know to be accurately correct."—— What! " *Extreme delicacy!*" Delicacy towards fellows like these; towards men who set the law at defiance, who go deliberately out, and shoot at each other's heads, when not many months have passed since a man was *hanged* for a similar offence, and that, too, though every means were tried of obtaining a pardon from that king, amongst whose *advisers* these very two men were at that time, and who, of course, advised him not to spare the life of that man! Talk of delicacy, indeed, towards men like these! It is the most insolent expression; it is the grossest insult upon the public understanding and taste, that has been for a long time attempted, even by the abettors of this set, who have brought the country to the brink of destruction.——It is added, that the *cause* of this duel is a quarrel between the parties of long standing; or, at least, of *some months standing.*—— Nothing was wanting to prove, that this nation, as to its public spirit and sentiment, was in the lowest state of degradation. The transactions at the close of the last session of parliament, the contempt with which the people were then treated; the utter disregard of all decency in this treatment; the " making *a stand* against *popular in-* " *croachment,*" when all that was demanded was the punishment of those, who had sold or swapped Seats in Parliament; this alone proved to the whole world to what a degraded state the people of this once-high-

minded country had sunk; but, if proof had still been wanting, it certainly would have been found in the history of this duel, where we see the government committed to the hands of men, having so little sense of common decency as to forget the high rank they had been placed in, and to turn out, like a couple of brothel-heated bullies, and shoot at each other's heads.——Why, these men, besides having the principal affairs, by far the most important affairs of the nation, committed to their immediate direction and controul, were, in virtue of their office of privy-counsellors alone, *keepers* of the king's secrets; *magistrates* of the very highest order; and *judges* in many very important cases. And, in order to give them peculiar protection, the law makes it *felony* for any one to *assault* and *strike* them in the execution of their office. It was by men of this description, that Mr. Le Maitre was sent to jail and there kept for *five years*, and then discharged, without being brought to trial; without ever having any charges preferred against him; and without being able to obtain any redress, though he petitioned the parliament over and over again, and though he was daily told, in the news-papers, which, during the five years, reached him in the jail, that the war was going on for the preservation of the liberties of Englishmen. ——Such were the *powers*, which, as privy-counsellors, were committed to the hands of these men.——As *ministers of state*, the public will do well to bear in mind, that, besides their patronage and power, a law was passed, in the time of Pitt, and in the passing of which both these men assisted, to send men to *Botany Bay*, to *transport them for life*, to put them upon a level with *felons*, for writing or publishing any thing, calculated *to bring them into contempt*. These are the men, who have proposed, and passed laws like this; these very men, who, while still ministers of state, go out upon a heath, and shoot at one another's heads! For writing or printing any thing, however *true*, calculated to expose men like these *to contempt*, any Englishman was liable to be transported; aye, and to be told, at the same time, that his sentence was *just*, that it was according to *law*, and that he ought to *bless God* for having such laws to live under.——The public will also bear in mind, that, with the sole exception of Mr. Charles Yorke, these two men were the very loudest, at the first broaching of the charges against the Duke of York, in the cry about a *Jacobin Conspiracy*, and in accusing the *press* of being the organ of that conspiracy; that these two men were the most strenuous, in the attempt that day made, to pave the way for laws, which should render the press a mere instrument in the hands of men in power, as the press in Calcutta is; and, that these two men were the loudest in the cry against what they called an "attack upon all public men," and in calling for a stand against popular encroachment. This should be now recollected by the insulted people of England; but, they have so long borne insult with unmoved gall, that they are scarcely to be either dreaded or pitied. ——Yes, these are the gentry, who complained so bitterly about the attempts to *degrade all public men;* who advised the king to recommend (in the last Speech from the throne), to the people in the parliament houses to go into their several counties and inculcate amongst their constituents *an obedience to the laws;* these are the people, during whose administration, the Crown Bar Judge at Winchester, at the last assizes, thought proper, in his charge to the Grand Jury (of which the Right Honourable old George Rose was foreman), to express his sorrow at observing, that there was a prevalent disposition to *degrade public men*, which he attributed to the *abuse of the liberty of the press;* yes, these are two of the gentry, who were in office at that very time, and who, at that very time, as it now appears, were brewing a quarrel, which has terminated in an attempt to kill, to murder each other.——When the Tinman of Plymouth was tried and punished so severely for an attempt upon the virtue of Mr. Addington, the circumstance of the latter being a *privy-counsellor* was strongly urged in *aggravation* of the offence; and, I am fully persuaded, that, if any one had said and published, that a Duel was about to take place between these two men, an out-cry would have been instantly raised against him; he would have been represented as having committed a dreadful outrage upon "his Majesty's government," in the persons of two of his Right Honourable Privy Counsellors; we should have seen all the high-sounding words of law marshalled against him; and, very likely, have seen him prosecuted to his utter ruin, and penned up in a jail, as distant as possible from his affairs and his friends. Yes, only for saying, that these men would do, or were likely to do, what they have now *actually done*, this would have been my fate, or that of any other

writer or publisher.——When we find, that these two men, the one Secretary of State for Foreign affairs, and the other the War-Secretary, have been at daggers-drawn for many months past, are our failures and misfortunes any longer a subject of wonder? For *several months past:* that is the fact stated. Is it not in human nature, that they should, during that time, have *thwarted* one another by all possible means; and, indeed, is it to be supposed, that two men, who could not be restrained from shooting at one another, would restrain themselves from doing any thing, in their official capacity, to annoy each other, and to produce each others disgrace? To what a state, then, is this nation reduced! What a shame, what a scandal, it is, that the affairs of a great nation should be thus committed! For months past, nay, for more than two years, of the most perilous part of this most perilous war, have the most important concerns, questions of war and of peace, been entrusted to these men. The expenditure of one half of those endless taxes that are weighing us to the earth; the faith and honour of the country; the lives of hundreds of thousands; and the happiness of millions, have all hung upon the breath of two men, whose malignant rivalship, or whose passions of one sort or another, have, at last, induced them to sally forth upon a heath, with the avowed intention of blowing out each other's brains! And, while this is going on, we are bidden not to attempt *to degrade public men*, upon pain of jail and pillory! ——It was this Mr. Canning; it was this son of Mrs. Hunn; indeed, it was both these men, who, as plainly as men could speak, recommended new and more severe laws against the Press, and that, too, because, as they said, the Press was the instrument of a Jacobinical Conspiracy; it was they, who cried out against those, who, as they said, were endeavouring to disturb the peace of mind of "our good Old "King," whose "*age* and *infirmities*" it became us to consider, when we were pressing for a certain decision in parliament. Have they, then, now the impudence to reproach others with a want of consideration for the king's peace of mind? They who, to the utter degradation of all rank and office, have turned out and popped at each other's heads. They, who have brought upon his reign a stain, which no other reign, in this or in any other country, has ever received; a stain that does not belong even to the worst part of the French revolution, in all its democratical madness? That revolution, mad and bloody as it was, never exhibited two ministers of state shooting at each other. ——What a figure do we, at this moment, cut in the eyes of the world.! Buonaparté's ministers are not thus employed. They are engaged in quite other sort of matters. This Mr. Canning, is he, who, above all others, has prated about the want of *decorum* and *dignity* in the proceedings of the French; it was he who talked so much about dignity, in his paper relative to the "universal Spanish nation." The world will now be able to judge of what his notions of dignity are worth. —— There wanted only this scandalous occurrence, this degrading, this black-guard rencontre, to make the fitness of the *Jubilee* complete. It will, indeed, after having congratulated the king upon, and returned God, thanks for, the six to seven hundred millions of government debt and the premium upon guineas; the increase of the poor rates and the doubling of the number of paupers; the creating of the Income and Assessed taxes with a vast addition to the number of all other taxes; the adding tenfold to the number and expence of the standing army; the introduction of large bodies of foreign troops into the kingdom; the fall of Holland, Switzerland, Denmark, Italy, Naples, Germany, before our mortal enemy, and, indeed, their having become dependencies of France; the existence of a French dock-yard and fleet at Antwerp, within four hours sail of the mouth of the Thames; the late events upon the Danube, and the more important negotiations now there going on; the achievements of our army at Dunkirk, at the Helder, at Ferrol, at Buenos Ayres, at Cairo, at Cintra, in Leon and Gallicia, at Walcheren, and though last, not least, at Talavera: after having congratulated the King upon all this, and taken a view of the present situation of our countrymen in the *hospitals* of Zealand and of Spain; after this it will be very fit to congratulate him upon the Duel between two of his ministers and privy-counsellors upon Putney Heath; it will be, indeed, a way to flatter him, and to smooth the latter part of his life, to thank him for having chosen, as the immediate managers of the most important of the national concerns, two men, who, after months of smothered hatred and malice, go out, and let fly a ball at each other's heads. The Jews and Seat-Mongers will, surely, not forget this topic of congratulation, when they call

upon the people to illuminate their houses in sign of joy. It will be for those Jews and Seat-Jobbers to tell us what mode was taken by the duelling ministers to transfer the papers, and the information, of their offices, to their successors. The Jobbers will be able to tell us, perhaps, what measures were taken by these Atlases of the state to shift the load upon other shoulders; and to shew us in what the case of either of these men, supposing the other to have been killed, would have differed from the case of the man, lately hanged upon a gallows in Ireland; and, when they are upon the subject of congratulation, they may go on to the fact of that man having been hanged, and having been refused to be pardoned, while these two men were amongst the advisers of the King.——After all, however, scandalous as this Duel is, disgraceful as it is to the government and to the nation, it is not, if one takes time to reflect, any thing to *wonder* at. What was to be expected from such men, placed in such a situation? Their appointment to such high offices, was, of itself, an unequivocal symptom of the rapid decline of the country; their continuance there was another symptom; and, that, when they became *rivals for power and emolument*, they should quarrel, and if they quarrelled, they should have no regard to decency, was naturally to be expected. These are, too, a brace of the "*young friends;*" a brace of the chickens that were hatched under the wing of Pitt, and for the fostering and rearing of whom this miserable nation *has paid so dearly*. These were two of the famous *Anti-Jacobins*, and Mr. *Ellis* (if it was *George*) was a third. These were two of the men, who rose out of the heat of Anti-Jacobinism. I know of no two like them; and, if you go and ask *the Irish*, they will tell you so too, with many and many an instance of their feats.——But, we deserve this, and much more. If the people of England had had common sense, they never would have fostered this numerous brood of Anti-Jacobins; and, if they had but a common portion of public spirit, they would now be taking all the lawful means in their power to guard themselves and their children against them, instead of contenting themselves, as they now do, with *silent* contempt, which never has any effect upon profligate public men.——I have but a word or two to say upon the relative merits, or, rather, demerits, of these pistolling privy-counsellors; and, that must be only conditionally. *If* it be true, that the cause of the duel was, what is stated in some of the news-papers; namely, that Mr. CANNING went to the Duke of Portland, in the month of May last, just about the time of the discussion about the other's having given an Office to be swapped against a Seat in Parliament, and endeavoured to get him turned out of his place, *without acquainting him with what he was doing, or had done;* if this be true, the other had, certainly, good reason to be offended; for the act was a very underhanded one, and quite worthy of a "*young friend*" and a "staunch *Anti-Jacobin.*" This I *know* nothing at all about; but, if the charge be true, Mr. Canning is the person most to be blamed, though nothing can justify the conduct of either. The public will recollect, that it was Mr. Canning who moved for the *acquittal* of Lord Castlereagh, in the case referred to, and that, upon that occasion, he accused the *people* of *factiousness*. If, therefore, it be true, that he was then at work to get Lord Castlereagh out, while he was pretending, in the House of Commons, to look upon him as innocent, and was calling him his "noble *friend;*" if this be true, he does, indeed, cut a very shabby figure, and furnishes us with a pretty good criterion whereby to judge of his sincerity and of the motives by which he was actuated.

CHANGE OF FACTIONS.——This event now seems to be inevitable. The No-Popery set appears to have worn itself out, before they have quite worn out the government. The *out* faction, by some called the *Whigs*, are all alive. They are as busy as wasps on a sunny morning, after long wet and cold. They have, for sometime, been reviving from their dormant state. The failure in Spain, last year, was very cheering to them; they began to buzz and to prune their wings; but, the unfortunate affair of the Duke of York, and the other *scat-selling* affairs that followed, and in all which affairs they proved themselves to be just as sound as their opponents; these affairs came and drowned the affairs of Spain. Now, however, the "*victories*" of Walcheren and Talavera, together with the state of affairs upon the Danube, have again warmed the whole faction into activity, and the wars in the cabinet, of which they have long been informed, have strongly tended to cherish those hopes, which the *Duel* seems to be in a fair way of realizing.——The government is just in that state, which is best

calculated to make them, when they come into power, as bad a ministry as ever this country saw. They will take possession of it by way of grace on their part; for, really, *as the system* is to be *persevered in,* there appears to be nobody but themselves capable of carrying it on. There would be men enough found to conduct the affairs of the nation, if *a reform of the system* were to take place; but, as long as the power and sway of the borough-mongers continue, the faction now out seems to be the only set of men that can be called in; and the system is in that desperate state, that even those of their enemies, who are friends of the system, will wish for their return to power.——Coming in, thus, by the way of *no-thanks*, they will hardly forbear to shew the nation that they feel their own consequence; but, let them bear in mind, that, though called in by *the necessities of the system*, they are not called in by *the voice of the people*, who have no more confidence in them, than they have in the faction whom they oppose.——The Morning Chronicle, the trumpet of the Whig faction, the editor of which had a place under them, while they were in power, and who, as we shall soon see, will have another, and, perhaps, a better, place under them, if they come in again; this print, of the 26th instant, says:——"It is now universally known, "that his Majesty has called for the "services of lord Grenville and lord "Grey; and that these *distinguished* "*Statesmen* are forthwith expected in "town. *We trust* that they will feel it "to be their duty to take upon themselves "the difficult and painful task of restoring "to the Government the efficiency it has "lost. It is *a happy presage* of their "*lasting* power, that *every eye is turned to* "*them as to our dernier resort;* and it is the "ardent hope, that they may form an Ad-"ministration that shall equally enjoy the "confidence of the King and the Heir "Apparent, as well as of the people at "large, *so as to set all questions of do-*"*mestic policy at rest*, and to unite all "descriptions and persuasions in the com-"mon cause. The prospect of their "return to power is hailed with so much "cordiality as apparently *to reconcile every* "*jarring sentiment*, and to make it *unneces-*"*sary to recur to that appeal* by which the "*sense* of the nation is upon such an event "generally collected. It will require some "days to complete the arrangement."—— This is, at once, as impudent and as foolish a puff as ever appeared even in a London news-paper.——Oh! he *trusts*, this writer does, that these two great statesmen will consent to take the *task* upon them! Bless us! how long is it since they wanted *wooing* to come into place? How long is it since any man began to doubt of their eagerness to get back into power? It is only two years since they withdrew from before parliament a Bill, which they had brought in under the pretended persuasion of its absolute necessity to the safety of the nation; it is only two years since they did this with the hope of retaining their places. To be sure, they were in long enough to place and pension all their relations and dependents; but, still there is no man who knows any thing of them, who will believe, that they will not jump at the offer of place.——What is the most impudent in this Whig puff is, however, the assertion, that "*every eye* is turned to-"wards them as our *dernier resort.*" If this writer means, as the men who are to give the *finishing stroke to the system*, well and good; for I do think, that, if they come into power, they will *see it out.* But, if he means, that the eyes of the people of England are turned towards these two noblemen and their former colleagues, as to persons, who are likely to save the country from the great and manifold dangers that threaten it, from within as well as from without; if he means this, then I say, that he means to promulgate, and *knowingly* to promulgate, as gross a falsehood as ever was put into print, even in the Morning Post or Courier.——No, Sir, the eyes of the people are not directed towards your party, towards your selfish faction, with any such hopes. The people of England, though they have had their spirit pressed and squeezed out of them, have not lost the faculty of remembering; though they retain not the spirit to resent injuries and insults, they cannot deprive themselves of the power of bearing them in mind. The people of England remember, because they cannot have forgotten, that the Whig faction, when it came into power, made a compromise, by which the Duke of York, contrary to their declared resolution, was suffered to retain all his offices and patronage, *some few* of the effects of which we have since seen;—— that, after having, for more than twenty years, been opposed to the administration of Pitt, which they had, upon numerous occasions, *proved* to be oppressive and foolish, and which had brought the nation

into the danger which then existed, they voted away 40 thousand pounds of the people's money to pay his debts, upon the ground of his *public services*, and, what was still more galling, more insolent towards this burthened people, that they voted him a public funeral and a monument at that people's expence;——that they had always been opposed to the bringing of *foreign troops* into this kingdom, which, upon more than one occasion, they had represented as a violation of those laws which placed the king's family upon the throne, and that, amongst the first acts of their administration, they brought in a bill to indemnify those, who had advised the king to augment the number of foreign troops before in the kingdom;——that the making war for Hanover had, for many years, been a subject of complaint with them, and that, in a few months after they got into power, they declared, in a public State-paper, that they should advise the king never to make peace for England, unless the restoration of Hanover to him was one of the conditions of that peace;——that, at the time when the Income Tax was imposed, they solemnly protested against it, as an act of oppression unparalleled, as inquisitorial, as destructive of every remaining notion of freedom, and that, in less than three months after they got possession of power, this tax, which they found at $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent, they augmented to 10 per cent, and when reminded of their former professions, seemed to contemn the folly of those who had thought them sincere;——that, in this case of the Income Tax, they did what Pitt had never attempted to do, namely, exempted from the payment of that tax all the money that the king might have in the funds, under whatsoever name it might there be lodged;——that, during the whole of their administration, they set their face against all inquiries into abuses, and endeavoured to beat down all those who attempted to cause such inquiries. All this, and a great deal more, the people of England well remember; and, they remember, too, that amongst the opponents of the Investigation into the conduct of the Duke of York, many of the Whigs were the most mischievous and malignant; they remember, that General Fitzpatrick, the Whig Secretary at War, was one of the sponsors for the Royal Duke's character; they remember that only 125 members of the whole House voted with Mr. Wardle; they remember, and, I hope, will never forget, that both factions were cordially united in resisting every attempt to pass a censure upon the act of having *sold a seat in the House of Commons*; and, in short, that, in every thing, respecting the interests of the people, the Whigs have shown themselves, to the full, as insensible as their rivals.——All this the people remember; all this, and much more, is fresh in the mind of every man, who thinks at all about politics; and, is it not, therefore, outrageously impudent to say, that all eyes are fixed upon Lords Grenville and Grey as the men to save the nation?——Of the *freedom of election* the Whigs were just as tender as their predecessors; they dissolved the parliament for the purpose of having another of their *own* choosing; and I, for my part, shall never forget the villainy, the unparalleled villainy, of their partizans in Westminster against Mr. Paull, whose cause, before they came into power, one part of them, at least, had pledged themselves to support.——In short, there is no doubt in my mind, that, of the two factions, this is hated the most by the people of England in general; and, I really think, that they are the most worthy of the hatred of the people of Ireland, who ought to be reminded, that it was the Whigs, who maintained, that there was a *French party in Ireland*, and who actually *drew up that* BILL, which was passed after they were turned out, and under which the people of Ireland now live.——No, no: the eyes of no man of sense either are, or can be, turned towards these men as persons calculated to save the country. They are called in, if called at all, not by the voice of the people, or by the good opinion of the king, but by the *necessities of the system*, which are such, that the present set appear to be unable to provide for them: and still more by *accident*; by an accidental quarrel, which has made such confusion in the ranks of No-popery, that it can no longer keep going. There is no doubt, that the Whigs, if we must still call them by that stinking old sham name, contain abler men than are to be found in the other faction, and men of much more dignity of character. There is no doubt, that they could, if they *would*, do great things for the country. But, there is also full as little doubt, that they will not attempt it. I am inclined to think, nay, I firmly believe, that Lord Grey would perform his promise, so solemnly made to the people, of obtaining for them a Reform of

the House of Commons; but, this he cannot attempt, while joined with Lord Grenville and others. It was, indeed, this junction that ruined the Fox party, and that precipitated their leader to the grave. The people expected, they confidently and they justly expected, that, when Mr. Fox came into power, they should hear the Pitt system reprobated from the Treasury Bench, and, not only that, but that they should see a new line of policy followed. But, instead of this, they heard, from that Bench, nothing but the *praises* of "the *great man now-no-more*;" and, as if this insult had not been sufficient, they heard Mr. Fox himself defend his measures upon the ground, that they were in pursuance of the principles of Pitt, to get rid of the operation of whose accursed principles it was desired that Mr. Fox should be in place. The system of Pitt, in all its parts, now became an object of praise on *both sides* of the House; and this appeared to be the only change of any consequence, which the change of men had produced.——The Wellesleys and their government in India, who and which had been a grand subject of attack with the Whigs before they came into power, became, at once, a grand object of their protection. Thus was it, too, with all peculators, all the old battening Pittites, who were kept in their offices and emoluments, in spite of every demand of reason, of honour, and of justice.——What do the friends and partizans of the Whigs promise us *now?* Even now, in this terrible situation, what do they propose that this set of *statesmen* shall do for us? They tell us, that the present set have uselessly poured out the treasure and the blood of the nation; that they have squandered away millions upon millions of money, and exposed many thousands of lives to almost certain destruction, and that, too, apparently with the intention of purchasing disgrace and infamy. Well; having told us this, would not one expect, that they would state to us, as one of the great benefits to be expected from a change, is, the *bringing of these men to justice?* Not at all! We hear not a word about any such thing. No such idea seems to have had a place in the mind of their chief partizan, who tells us, that what Lords Grey and Grenville will do, is, "*to restore to the government the "efficiency it has lost,*" a phrase, which has any meaning or no meaning at all, just as the writer pleases: a poor, vague, shuffling form of words, like a Methodist's prayer or the creed of a Jesuit. What is meant by the *efficiency* of the government? God knows, that, in but too many ways, the government, in the hands of these men, has been *efficient* enough, as witness the sending out of troops and the amount of our taxes.——This is, however, all we shall get in the way of promise now. A promise to do that which suits their own interests and views. They will be very cautious how they make any new and *definite* promises, having smarted so severely for the breach of so many promises before. ——Indeed, as to their predecessors (if a change is to take place) the new men will serve *as a shield.* They will call upon us boldly for *additional taxes*, and will tell us, they are to pay debts which their predecessors contracted; that the *fault* is not theirs; but belongs to those predecessors; and, if we call upon them, in return, to inquire *legally* into this fault, and *punish* it, they will laugh in our faces. They will soon convince us, as they did before, that their only dislike to their opponents, is, that they occupy the places that they want to occupy themselves, and one of the great uses of which places is to provide for their families and personal friends at the people's expence. Nay, instead of bringing their predecessors to justice; instead of any thought of that sort, we shall see the dependents of those predecessors provided for by a new batch of pensions and allowances.——We shall, too, see the same disgusting meanness as to the Pittites now in inferior offices. The Fox party did, in this respect, behave in the basest manner, that ever marked the conduct of public men. I do not say, that their partizans did not deserve it; for no man should ever make himself dependent upon any minister; but, the fact is, that there were, in every part of the country, men, who, for many years, had been making sacrifices of all sorts to their adherence to the Fox party; and, when that party came into power, they received their reward in being neglected, shunned, and, in a short time, calumniated. They had, in every part of the kingdom, the mortification to see, that the pert Pittite still held his office, and that, too, *in spite* of the Foxites. The secret was this: the Foxites could do nothing without the consent of the Grenvilles, and they were resolved to keep in the adherents of Pitt as instruments wherewith to prevent the Foxites from gaining an ascendency; and to this these latter had the meanness to submit. In short,

the people every where felt, that there was, in fact, *no change*; that the same influence prevailed, and that nearly all the same persons were in power. In this county of Hants, for instance, excepting a few places about the Dock-yards, that the faction itself laid its hands on, all was, as usual, still left to the Right Honourable Old George Rose, whose minions laughed at the long-expecting and now despairing Foxites. There was no change of influence, whether in the custom-house, the stamp office, the other tax-offices, the militia, the magistracy, or, in short, in any department in the county, through the whole of which the same system of exclusion prevailed against the Foxites with as much rigour as it had prevailed at any former period.——I know of nothing that gave rise to so much contempt of the Whigs as this. It marked their insignificance so strongly; or, it was a proof of such base ingratitude. My opinion is, too, that the same would take place again; in which case, however, they may rest assured of not remaining in place a twelvemonth. If I were to select the particular cause, which I looked upon as more efficient than any other in producing that sort of public feeling towards them, which was well known to exist, and the existence of which emboldened Nopopery to advise the king to turn them out, I should say, that that cause was, their unfeeling neglect, their base abandonment, of their friends, their long-tried and faithful adherents, whom they sacrificed without the least apparent remorse, for the sake of keeping well with the Grenvilles. It was this connection that was the cause of their fall before; and, unless they change their mode of acting, it will pull them down again.——It was quite diverting to see Pittite wretches, who, from this cause, had been kept in their several offices, making use of those offices to undermine the ministry, who had been base enough to leave the power in their hands; and, what was best of all, they, almost every where, and in this county in particular, were full as zealous against the Grenvilles as they were against the Foxites. The truth is, that the Whigs wished to *remain in power*, and they thought that purpose would be accomplished by buying off their enemies, rather than by rewarding their friends; than which a more weak or more base notion never entered into the mind of man, as was proved in the sequel; for, never was the fall of any ministry attended with so little sorrow, on the part of the nation. They really had *no friends*. Even their offices at Whitehall were crammed with the creatures of Pitt; so that, they became very soon objects of hatred with their former friends, and objects of contempt with those whose enmity they thought they had purchased.——After all, however, LET US GIVE THEM ANOTHER FAIR TRIAL. If the king should put them in office, let us wait and see what they will do, before we condemn them. If it shall appear, that, in spite of all they have now witnessed, they mean to go on in the old way, and give us no change except that of men, we cannot too soon begin to assail their proceedings; but, let us see this first; and let us, in the mean while, *endeavour to forget the past*. What I think they ought not to do may easily be guessed at from what I have complained of their having done; and what I think they ought to do, may be as easily guessed at from what I have complained of their not having done. They had the power to do all that was necessary for the safety and happiness of the nation, and they lost their places because they did not attempt to make use of that power. They were turned out, as they themselves said, by a low and despicable intrigue; but, if they had done any thing for the people; if they had been about doing any thing for the people, those, who were engaged in, those who were the principal actors in, that intrigue, would no more have thought of such a thing, than they would have thought of seizing a lion by the jaws. Their more cunning enemies had seen them rapidly sink in the public estimation, and therefore it was, that they availed themselves of the first pretence to work them out. I never remember joy more general than that which was expressed upon their expulsion from the cabinet. There was neither sorrow from a public motive, nor pity from a private one. Let them take warning, or such will again be their fate.——I have observed, that the Morning Chronicle, in speaking of the origin of the quarrel between the pistolling privy counsellors, has this remark: that, "if MR. CANNING did advise the king to put out Lord "Castlereagh, and put *Marquis Wellesley* "in his place, he acted like *a faithful servant* of his sovereign, and gave *very good* "*advice.*" I am not only of a different opinion; but, I am disposed to consider this remark of the Morning Chronicle, es-

pecially when viewed with some others, made lately in the same print, as a very bad omen of what will be the system of the Whigs. The Wellesleys have, to be sure, treated them in a way, which would, if the Whigs had any spirit at all left in them, effectually remove from our minds all dread of the former having any share in ruling us; but, this language of the Morning Chronicle, and the notorious vassalage of the Foxites, really makes one dread that some coalition of this sort will take place; and, if it does, Mr. Perry's place will not be worth above two months purchase. He would, in that case, do better to join us Jacobins at once; for, unless he make up his mind to become a thorough-going Pittite, a Calcutta man, he may be assured that his services will soon be supplanted by those of the editor of the Morning Post, who, I perceive, is very fast tacking about, in order to be ready to sail in the new direction.——The Fox party has, from one cause and another, already suffered great diminution; and, if they now suffer the Wellesleys to be imposed upon them, they will all be shoved out in less than six months.——One would think, that they would not be so foolish; but, there is no saying what the eagerness for place may not do. If Mr. Fox had, in 1806, insisted upon his own terms of coming into place, he must, in a few months, have had those terms granted to him; that is to say, if his terms had been bottomed upon the principles for which he had contended. So must it be now, if Lord Grey and others were to insist upon such terms; but, if they enter the cabinet upon conditions such as they entered it upon before, and especially if they enter it with the Wellesleys, they cannot remain three months. They will be taken in merely to be demolished; to be finished; and, then, out they go, neck and heels, for the public to spit upon. *Out* of the ministry, and taking the side of the people, they may not only be something, but they may be formidable; but, if they enter the cabinet once more in the character of underlings; if they get one more dip of the negro, they may go and hang or shoot one another, for they will never again be admitted into the society of white men; they may associate with the rest of the tawnies, under the command of the Calcutta heroes, but associate with people with white skins they certainly will not.——I, for my part, shall not have far to go, for proof as to whether they are underlings, or not. If they suffer this *monopoly* of power; this *exclusive system* of county government; if they suffer this to remain in Hampshire for only one month after they are in power, I shall be very certain as to what the nation has to expect from them.——Considering them altogether, they certainly have, beyond all comparison, more talent and more individual character, than their opponents, whom, indeed, it required a state of things like the present to put into the situation of ministers. Some years ago, a man, who, after describing Lord Castlereagh and his brother pistoler, should have said, that two such men would become privy counsellors and ministers of state, would have been treated as a jester, or an ideot. But, neither talent nor character, nor both togegether, will now do, unless there be a resolution to produce *a change* in the *system* of conducting the affairs of the government. If the same system be to continue, it is full as well to have one set of ministers as the other; and, indeed, any mere change of *men* is a grievous misfortune to the country, because it is sure to cause a great addition to its burthens.——There is a talk about a *coalition* between the Whigs and part of No-popery. This I venture to pronounce *impossible*. It cannot be.

JUBILEE.——As the Seat-sellers and Contractors, and all that gang, who get rich by war and taxation, are bent upon a noise and guzzling match, it may not be amiss to tell, in the words of CHAMBERS, what is the proper way of keeping a Jubilee. "One of our Kings, viz. EDWARD III, "caused his birth-day to be observed in "manner of a Jubilee, when he became "fifty years of age, but not before or after. "This he did by *releasing prisoners, pardoning all offences, making good laws,* and "*granting many privileges to the people.*" ——This is a sort of Jubilee, that the unfeeling boozers and guttlers of the City have not much notion of, as would appear from a Mr. *Mawman* (no bad name for the occasion and the cause), who insists upon it as necessary to have the expence of the dinner defrayed out of the City purse, lest, if the expence came out of the pockets of individuals, nobody should attend. This is a pretty good proof of Mr. Mawman's opinion, that the *loyalty* of the City is not worth the price of a dinner. ——But, I beg the public to remark, that the leading men, in the promotion of this Jubilee, are *Bank Directors* and *India Directors*, the one while the guinea sells for

twenty five shillings in their notes, and the other asking for aid from the public, as a pauper asks for parish relief. —— Will these Bank Directors do as Edward III. did? Will they petition the king for the release of the many poor wretches who are waiting the severe sentence of those laws, those acts, which are unknown to the ancient principles of English jurisprudence, and which have made it *death* to imitate *their* money, or to write their names at the bottom of a bit of paper? Will they do this? Will they ask for the *mitigation* of the sentence of only *one* of these unfortunate wretches? Or, will they, upon the very morning of the Jubilee, go and see them kick their last upon the gallows?—This is verily the most audacious insult that ever was attempted; and I cannot help looking upon it as a trial of what the people will bear, preparatory to some new and yet unheard-of act of oppression.—I should not wonder if they had it in contemplation to apply for a law to make it transportation to say that *Bank Notes are at a discount*; or something of that sort. In short, after what we have seen, on the part of these Jews and Contractors, there is nothing that ought to astonish us.

WM. COBBETT.

Botley, Thursday, 28th Sept. 1809.

STATE OF THE COUNTRY.

Sir; Among foreigners this nation has been esteemed a nation of humourists; and, doubtless, if differing in judgment and reasoning from the rest of the world be genuine humour, there is no people under the sun who have an equal claim to the same title. We are separated from the continent by a channel so narrow, that but too many of our Southern brethren are within hearing of the cannon, and within sight of the illuminations of rejoicing for victories over ourselves and our allies; and yet by a strange perversion of judgment, we hug ourselves, and act as if the victories were our own, and the French, from a mistaken notion of politesse, had been at the expence of celebrating their own reverses. We send out expedition upon expedition, with the advantage of sending them whithersoever we list, and of attacking points the most unguarded; and yet, with this advantage, the engine but recoils upon the feeble hands that directed it, and each successive expedition returns more beaten, more disgraced, and more confounded than that by which it was preceded.—With this accumulation of annual ignominy, instead of feeling humbled by our habitual blunders, and the awful judgments that await them, or, what is more to the point, instead of acknowledging that something must be wrong, and endeavouring to redress it, we grow more foul-mouthed toward friend and foe; we abuse the latter for beating us, and the former for suffering himself, like ourselves, to be beaten. With what efforts of panegyric, clumsy indeed, but well intended, was the patriotic Archduke celebrated but yesterday! With what virulence of invective is he persecuted to-day! It would appear that this prince anticipated with joy the defeat of his army, that he deliberately planned his own destruction at Wagram, and hastened to consummate it at the feet of Napoleon. The long, the laborious, the heart-rending services which he has performed for a corrupt system, to which, like all other champions in the same cause, he has fallen a victim, are forgotten. His former merits are as nothing; and he is now branded as a traitor by the humourous malignity of our hired and even unhired writers, and their too partial, credulous, or corrupt readers. Those on the field of action felt, and severely felt, that the hopes of Austria were lost at Aspern. The unbroken communication of Napoleon with the islands in the Danube, his tête-de-pont which stood in the face of the enemy unassaulted, and even without insult, and, above all, the fearful serenity of his mind, prove this defeat to have been achieved rather by the pens of English hirelings, than by the swords of our allies. Yet, placed as we are at a secure distance from the scene, we presume to call that Armistice infamous and unnecessary, to which a brave, a numerous, an almost numberless host, headed by a leader respectable for skill, and unimpeached for integrity, was *compelled* to submit. We, whose every scheme but heaps upon us treble confusion, are the first to join our voices with those of the enemy in stigmatising a nation for being vanquished after a struggle for independence. This it is, Sir, to be protected from invasion by local advantages, and the natural barrier of the sea—Glorious advantage! that we may look tamely on the wreck of empires, and join our reproaches to the vanquished, with the scoffings of the vanquishers!—Could a person be found,

whom the fame of occurrences for these last 15 years had not reached, he would doubtless expect, from the tenor of language held in this country, that while continental armies were repulsed at all points, the British held good more than their ancient fame, by an unbroken series of brilliant exploits. How eagerly would he listen, how hang upon the lips of the narrator! With what delight would the latter dwell upon one splendid, and *efficient* battle, in Egypt! I use the term *efficient;* for if the end be not answered, the exploit is to be numbered with failures. With what emphasis would he enforce, and vary this one, and almost only one tale, and with what despair would he cast his eye over the long catalogue of calamity and humiliation which truth would compel him to produce! I talk not of skirmishes, but of those encounters, which by their magnitude contribute to the mastery of empires—and of these, from the abandonment of the Toulonnese, whom we had sworn to protect, to the late childish business at the Scheldt, the general tenor has been failure, disgrace, defeat. Let us throw a hasty glance over these most distressing items of national disaster. Believe me, Sir, it may be of use—it may lead us to a detection of errors, and a developement of a wicked system—for, although a *casual* accident might befall; continued, and unvaried disaster in our military attempts, cannot, when we consider the transcendant bravery of our troops, be attributed to ought else but a depraved and wicked system. But if no other end be answered by the recital, owing to that blindness which refused the offered light, it may at least teach us humility, and a fellow-feeling for the partners in our misfortunes. Let us see.—Dunkirk! and our consequent retreat.—The Helder! and that immense host, which the French with a force totally disproportioned in numbers, compelled to escape by capitulation—The above are princely trophies! Ferrol! or the manoeuvres of Sir James against open gates. Poor Sir James! he had the treasure in view, but from a sort of false modesty relinquished that and the peerage for a secure asylum in the ships. Buenos Ayres! It was an easy thing—any body, as in the latter case, was fit to command.—You had only to shew yourself; the Spaniards were poor creatures even at home, and in those parts were as easy to drive as their Merino sheep. Besides, the blessing of an English *governor*, (for *government* is a term obsolete in the colonies) would alone, *one would think*, bring them over. Those stupid ideots of Spaniards *thought otherwise*, and so, as they would not yield to general Whitelock, general Whitelock yielded to them, and thus narrowly escaped a peerage. I pass over the last deplorable business in Egypt under general Wauchope, and the gallant skirmish (for it was no more) at Maida; since neither the loss of the one nor the gain of the other were of a scale of magnitude sufficient to influence the destiny even of a province, and much less of a nation. The first was one unvaried tissue of disaster to ourselves, the latter was glorious to ourselves, and only disastrous to our wretched allies, whom we seduced, and, as usual, abandoned to destruction. Copenhagen! I do not imagine the greatest amateur will insist much on the ***** committed on Copenhagen, I am willing to pass it over, or even to number it, with splendid events, if it be insisted on, because it succeeded. We went to *****; neither did we come empty away. The part of ***** was not ill sustained, and the *prayers* of the fleet, no doubt, called down success upon our arms in this *pious* undertaking. I am aware that some difference of opinion prevails relative to this business; but, upon the whole, I am inclined to think it will not be an unentertaining supplement to some future edition of the history of the Buccaneers. To this brilliant list, add the consequences of the affair at Vimiera, by which we gained the distinguished honour of submitting our fleets to the use of the French, and of elevating our *naval men* to the rank of *carriers* to an enemy *from* a country where all was hostile, *to* a country where all was friendly; *from* difficulties, dangers, an exasperated mob, an enemy far superior in numbers, scanty supplies, and an untenable position, *to* the safety and plenty of a land that should recruit them for our destruction. Of the three remaining exploits, our flight from Salamanca to Corunna, our *victory* at and *flight* from Talavera, our late grand achievement at the Scheldt, which must have caused more Dutch women to miscarry than was ever known before, let the *amateurs* select which is their favourite.——All this is wondrous. But, Sir, next to the exploits themselves, the wonder is to observe with what address the memories of them are erased from the minds of men. A theatre, demolished, or rebuilt; a Mrs. Clarke; a Jubilee; a contest between Mrs. Dickons

and Madame Catalani; or a Duel between two such men as Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning, a something, and an any thing, is sure to interpose between the just indignation of a brave and insulted people, and the wretches by whom they have been successively disgraced. With what horror must the cabinet have read the Convention of Cintra, had it not been smothered in the fumes of Covent Garden theatre? With what dread would they have listened to the groans of a suffering people for their heroic countrymen who *fell uselessly*, or *returned fugitives* from the Spanish campaign, had not those groans been converted into laughter by the royal Love-letters! How might they have felt, when a poor old man who had retired from all public employment, on the plea of years, and infirmities, was called upon to fill a place, of all others requiring the greatest activity and ability, that of Commander in Chief, had not their sense of feeling been deadened by another blow yet more violent, in a *grand* expedition, and the appointment of a *bran new* general (for warfare can alone make an *old* general, and not years, as is usually supposed in this country) to command it—and how might their attention be rivetted to this last, the consummation of indignities, which has been purchased by the blood or by the diseases of more than half that immense force, were not that newly-goaded attention diverted from this dreadful blow, to the rise of price at a theatre, to Catalani, John Kemble, a Jubilee, or a Duel between the Noodle and Doodle of our Cabinet!—— Oh, this is foul! this is indeed very foul! but worse may yet await us. But two days ago it was announced that *Lord Cochrane*, who has well merited the hatred of certain *cautious* and *prudent* men by the uniform *success* attending his enterprizes, *transacted business in company with the hero of Ferrol* at Lord Mulgrave's office. I am not initiated in the mysteries of cabinets; Would to God there were no mystery in them, but all was plain, open, honest, and intelligible; but I do confess to you (impossible as it may appear) I read a fearful omen from this strange alliance of men so totally dissimilar, engaged in the same business. Is the Ferrolian chieftain really about to relinquish the peaceful occupations in which he is born to shine, for the dangers and mishaps of another essay in the art of war? Is a peerage so necessary to human happiness as to induce him to change his very nature, and rush through ways so dangerous to explore? Of the fact I am ignorant; I should have read of Sir James and Lord Mulgrave to all eternity, without even thinking of such a thing as war. But the name of Lord Cochrane puts it naturally into one's head, and as late events shew nothing to be impossible, I formed a most dreadful divination that another judgment impended over us.—At present I shall say no more; but in taking my leave, I call on you, and every man, who is not absolutely hired and engaged to plot his country's downfall, to *arrest* the attention of Englishmen, and to *fix* it on one, or on all of the disasters to which a nation, the most gallant in the universe, has been bowed, by the folly or the voracity of their guardians; to evince to them, in the clearest light, how much blood has been shed, what diseases contracted, what treasures exhausted, in foolish and vain expeditions, which could not have been more disastrous, if they had been planned for the sake of the contractors whom they enrich, the court generals whom they are intended to ennoble, and the scorn and laughter of an enemy who rises in vigour and in pride from the successive defeats and disgraces which we purchase to ourselves at this dear rate. Yours,

BRITANNICUS.

JUBILEE PROPOSED.

SIR; As the present age will ever remain conspicuously memorable in the annals of the Christian æra, when posterity revert to this eventful page, will not the independence that this island has maintained, amidst the fatal wrecks of power that we have witnessed, be revered and glorified? Does not this part of our retrospect afford matter of exultation—that, though we have been so long menaced with destruction by most inveterate enemies, yet we have, under the auspices of our God, preserved our valued country, secured her pre-eminence, and, amidst the blessings of liberty, enjoy the blissful reign of peace within her borders? During the awful calamities that have afflicted such an extensive portion of the civilized world, has not our munificence and succour to the oppressed been manifestly exemplified? Though this auxiliary sort of warfare has been very prejudicial to ourselves, yet we are not compelled to become fugitives; we are not subject to the sanguinary laws of tyranny and despotism; we are not the victims of that vengeance which has been

sworn against us; on the contrary, I boldly assert, that we are the greatest, the most illustrious people on the earth; happy in the supreme felicity of social intercourse, undisturbed by faction, and rich beyond competition in the prolific bounties of nature; therefore, sir, I would have this eminent period of our history commemorated in a most signal manner throughout Great Britain. I know myself incompetent to premise adequately a plan of such magnitude as the circumstance requires; but the impression I feel as to the happy consequences that would result, stimulate me to the attempt.—The divine historian, Moses; the inimitable Psalmist, and all the sacred writers of antiquity, exhorted the people to praise and thanksgiving, not in a spiritless manner, with distrustful visages, but with cheerful countenances, with songs and dances, with timbrels, harps, sackbuts, psalteries and dulcimers, which appears to me a more reasonable way of displaying gratitude for benefits, than the uttering any set form of words in a sullen and morose manner, as if, contrary to will, compulsively driven to it.—I would, therefore, recommend the institution of a National Jubilee, to consist of Grand Sacred Oratorios, Amphitheatrical Sports, Thespian Amusements, and various other public Diversions, somewhat after the following manner: Grand Oratorios should be appointed to take place in every Cathedral Church in Great Britain, and in other Churches or Chapels remotely situate from Cathedrals; these should consist in sacred recitatives, airs, and choruses, appropriate to the occasion, both original and select.—Extensive amphitheatres should be erected upon specified plains throughout the country, at proper distances from each other, in the centre of which gymnastic exercises should be exhibited, after the manner of the Olympian, Pythian, Isthmian and Nemean Games of Greece, instituted in commemoration of remarkable occurrences: These sports should consist in trials of skill in the arts of fencing, cudgel-playing or single-stick, sparring, wrestling, horsemanship, and the like; together with morrice-dancing, running, leaping, throwing, &c. The champions who excelled in these exploits should be dignified with honorary meeds, such as weapons of war; the air at every interval to be agitated with the most powerful bands of martial music, playing the national airs of "Rule Britannia," "Britons strike home," "See the conquering Hero comes," "God save the King," &c. Perhaps, in this instance, I may, by some, be accused of an offence against the refined sense of the times, by wishing to introduce the customs of those remote ages; but those who are acquainted with the estimation in which Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, and many other eminent poets, historians, and philosophers, held these public games, will bear witness for me that no inconsistency whatever attaches to it. The Greeks in their wars with the Persians were indebted to these institutions for their most memorable victories. Those who signalized themselves at the battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Platæa, had before obtained rewards at the public games. "Die," said his congratulating companions to Anaxagoras, who had been a very successful competitor, "die, for thou canst not be a God." Herodotus relates a story of some Arcadians who were introduced to Xerxes, and being asked what was doing in Greece, they answered, "that it was the season of "the Olympic games." Being asked, "how the conquerors in those contentions "were rewarded," they answered, "by "an olive garland," upon which Tritantæchmes, a prince of the blood-royal of Persia, exclaimed, "O, Mardonius, what "a people have you brought us to fight "against, who contend among themselves, "not for riches, but for virtue." Some of the most eminent English divines have also written with much eulogy their sentiments upon these institutions, and perhaps the following elegant illustration of them, by Archbishop Potter, may serve to heighten their propriety; "These "games," says he, "had excellent politi-"cal effect in promoting national union, "in diffusing the love of glory, and train-"ing the youth to martial exercises; they "cherished, at once, an heroical spirit, "which led to the formation of extraor-"dinary and hazardous enterprizes; they "contributed essentially to the improve-"ment of the Greek nation, for while they "promoted hardiness and agility of body, "they likewise cultivated urbanity and "politeness; they were the resort of the "poets, historians, and philosophers."—Conveniently detached from these amphitheatres, spacious buildings should be temporarily erected for Thespian performances, in situations where provincial theatres could not be resorted to. These amusements should consist in scenes be-

twixt characters personifying British sailors, soldiers, landlords, politicians, &c. illustrating in a chronological manner, the progress of our present greatness; histories of the achievements of our most illustrious heroes of every age, wherein cowardice and despondency should be rendered as contemptible as possible. These dialogues would be well calculated to give in a comprehensive manner, an account of our present eminence contrasted with the imbecility of contemporary nations: the whole of which should be diversified with old national songs, and appropriate new ones, set to most simple alluring tunes, so that young and old should, as it were, learn to sing them by instinct; no doubt but some admirable little pieces would be produced, though it would be a confoundedly busy time at Parnassus; this performance should also be animated by the most appropriate music playing such spirited airs and marches, as might be appointed.—Sailing and rowing matches should be promoted in every situation where they could be accomplished. Public breakfasts and dinners, balls, exhibitions of artificial fireworks, and illuminations, would be matters of course during the festival, which should be arranged as speedily as possible, that the advantages of the long days might be obtained; and, indeed, the purposes of it being of a nature that admits of no delay, the early accomplishment of it would be very material.—Oratorial, Amphitheatrical, Thespian, and other committees should be chosen in each department, consisting of the most eminent characters in the neighbourhood, for which they may be deputed; these committees should arrange and regulate the performances in such a manner as they thought most proper, and military appointments should be made for the preservation of order and tranquillity in every district during the festivities.—The expenses should be defrayed by subscription to each performance, assisted by voluntary contributions, and wherever the expenses unavoidably exceeded the amount raised, the committee in such case should be remunerated by an order upon the Exchequer; or if an overplus remained in the hands of any committee, it should be given towards such deficiencies as the Exchequer might be liable to be called upon to make up.

C. L.

STATE OF SPAIN.

Sir;—When the people of Great Britain feel their purses fast emptying, and blood flowing, in defence of Spain, it would not, perhaps, be amiss, to let them know, through the medium of your excellent work, something of the political œconomy of that country as affecting the happiness of it's inhabitants; that Englishmen may judge of the principles of our ministry in defending such a system, and of their sagacity in even hoping, far less expecting, that the great body of the people of Spain are actuated with enthusiasm, love, or respect for that system sufficiently strong to enable them effectually to resist the arms of Buonaparté in its defence, even with the most powerful assistance Great Britain can afford them.—In the first place then, the government of Spain is completely despotic, was so, and is to continue to be so, for aught we have heard to the contrary; even if Buonaparté were driven out to-morrow. The Spaniards cannot complain and say, as the people in some countries may, "*decipimur specie Libertatis,*" for the poor souls, for centuries past, have neither tasted, smelled, nor even had a Pisgah view of liberty. Their religion as well as government is of that description that tends to keep the people ignorant, paralizing and depressing every species of mental and corporeal energy. Their laws are enacted for the very purposes of monopoly and oppression. The higher ranks (and the church) in Spain, as in other countries, by means of the villanous laws of primogeniture and entails, have monopolized almost every acre in the kingdom. Their foreign commerce itself is a mere monopoly of the government, by which it is carried on; their domestic and internal traffic is hampered by a thousand vexatious, though legal enactions. While agriculture, the most important of concerns, in every country, may be there said to be always *in articulo mortis*, in the very act of expiring.

(To be continued.)

THE EDINBURGH REVIEWERS,

AND PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

Sir;—That men of genius and education should prostitute their talents to the pur-

suits of party, is at all times to be regretted; but when those who assume the office of public censors, and, by virtue of that office, guide the judgments of no inconsiderable a part of the community, descend to such a practice, it calls forth a feeling harsher than regret, and may be looked upon as an immediate act of wickedness. In no other point of view, can I consider the paper upon Parliamentary Reform, inserted in the last number of the Edinburgh Review; a paper upon which, it seems, the Editors have bestowed uncommon pains, but which, like most other elaborate productions, carries fallacy on the face of it, and shows the argument to be untenable of itself, by the sophistry employed in its defence.

To follow them through all the mazes of logical division, and to explore the endless subtleties and refinements with which they have endeavoured to hamper and mislead their readers, would be a task as difficult of execution as it would be unprofitable in the result: I shall, therefore, confine myself to the basis of their objections against Reform, presuming, that if they shall be found to be defective there, it will be unnecessary to pursue them farther.

It cannot have escaped you, Sir, that when men of ingenuity are employed in a bad cause, which affords, as it were, no resting place on which they may make a stand, the first measure they have recourse to is to build one out of such materials as though differing mainly from the subject in dispute, still carry with them an appearance of identity. The Edinburgh Reviewers have, accordingly, charged the advocates for Reform, with disseminating, as a principle, that it will immediately correct all abuses, and in an instant restore the state to its pristine purity and vigour; as though they had been foolish enough to say, Reform in the House of Commons is like a magic wand, or a metallic tractor, a single touch from which will eradicate all complaints, and transform a thing from one extreme to the other. Now, if I understand any thing of what has been said upon the subject, nothing can be farther from the truth than this language which they impute to the Advocates for Reform; so far, indeed, from it being the case, that I have understood it to have been uniformly declared by them, that the remedy of our present system must naturally be a work of time, and that the longer that system is persisted in, the longer time it will require to effect a safe and solid reparation. To be sure, it has always been insisted on, that the first step towards obtaining it, is a Reform in the House of Commons; that this step is primary and indispensable; that it is the prop on which all other measures hang, the root from which they all of them must spring;—in short, (to be a little *learned* on the occasion,) that it is a *sine qua non*, without which a change in our present mode of Government is hardly to be desired. If this be compared with what has been observed by the Reviewers themselves, it will be seen, that their observations tend rather to confirm than weaken the position, notwithstanding they are advanced against it.

The three principal evils in our actual condition, they admit, are, 1st, the burden of our Taxes; 2nd, the preponderating influence of the Crown, arising out of that burden; and 3rd, the monopoly of political power by a few persons, which, they say, (I confess, to my astonishment) the nature of our constitution has a tendency to create. Now, to follow their own order, if the burden of our taxes be the first of the three principal evils, out of the many evils with which our Government abounds; if this, I say, be the chief and most material of all our grievances, it cannot be disputed, that the House of Commons, to whom the levying and appropriation of the taxes essentially and almost exclusively belong, is the first power to be looked to for redress, if the evil is such as will admit of it. For, here, it is material to note, that these Reviewers, to evade the question, have thrown out some desultory remarks on the nature of taxation, shewing, that the amount of taxes is a criterion by which the wealth and power of a nation may be proved; and insinuating, that our present burden is demonstrative of the strength and sanity of the state, rather than of the extravagance and corruption of its ministers: and that, arising from our own intemperate love of war, it is irremediable while war exists.—But, putting away the doctrine of taxation as referent to a nation's wealth, let us consider not so much the *burden* as the *disposition* of the taxes: it is this, and this only, I apprehend, that those who are advocates for Reform allude to, when they talk of reducing taxes and lightening the people of their burden. If the taxes, in their present state, were no more than adequate to the just expenses of an economical and

upright government, I will be bold to say, that the people, straitened as they are, would glory with these Reviewers, in being able to supply the means of fulfilling its every want; that they would forego their greatest comforts, and sacrifice their dearest pleasures; but, when they see their hard-earned contributions collected together in a heap, and squandered away by the gross, on empty pageantry, disgraceful armaments, and futile enterprizes; and, above all, when they see them dissipated in pensions and annuities, among those very persons who are the immediate causes of this scandalous expenditure; how is it possible for them to be silent, and not, at least, enquire if the evil admits of remedy? And to whom can they turn so naturally in their distress, as to their representatives; those men whom they have selected as guardians of their rights, and who, if the spirit of the Constitution were in force, would require no one to point out to them their duty, much less to solicit them to act up to it? But, the Reviewers would persuade us, that a Reform in the House of Commons would not render the representatives of the people more susceptible of these abuses; and insidiously contend, that they would be repeated, although perhaps in a less criminal and offensive manner, by any set of ministers whatever.—The next point, as connected with a diminution of the taxes, to which they refer, is the statement of Mr. Wardle; and here, again, they have compleatly misrepresented him and those who support Reform. This statement, which they deem extraordinary (and extraordinary, indeed, it is), contains, according to their representation, nothing more than a plan for the reduction of our forces. Now, say they, if war is to be carried on, our forces should be increased and not diminished; as if Mr. Wardle had recommended such a measure, in effect. Why, sir, a man may, with equal justice, be accused of a desire to spoil a tree or meadow, by cutting off dead branches from the one, or rooting out thistles from the other. Mr. Wardle has recommended no reduction of our effective forces; he has only suggested the propriety of dismissing those who live upon the country, without affording it any benefit in return; of keeping up our Navy to its full amount, at two thirds of its present cost; and of abolishing certain useless and ridiculous fortifications. How this can be construed into a wish to weaken our military establishments, must to every candid person be surprizing. To me, it seems, not only the most desirable method of effecting a reduction in our taxes, but of concentrating and invigorating our almost exhausted energies.

The second evil pointed out by the Reviewers, is the preponderating influence of the crown, and this they admit to its full extent, but deny, that a Reform in the House of Commons is at all calculated to remove it. It is a little unfortunate, that the metaphysical talents of these gentlemen, should set them so far above the rest of mankind, that what appears obvious to persons of common understanding, should be seen by them in a totally different point of view. For instance, I had always understood, according to the principles of our constitution, that the power of the people opposed itself to the influence of the crown; and that accordingly as one or other of them assumed preponderance, so was it to be corrected, by investing the weaker side with more authority; or, what is the same thing, retrenching the ascendancy of the stronger. Now, that a free representation of the people will give to the people a greater degree of power, is too palpable to be denied; and if a Reform in the House of Commons amounts to a free representation, what more is necessary to correct this preponderating influence, of which the Reviewers, in common with the country at large, so heavily complain?—But, it is observed by them, that the evil is radically implanted in the system; that the people are themselves corrupted, and that, too, to such a degree, that it is their interest to support corruption. That this is true, to a certain extent, may possibly be the case; in as far as a very large proportion of the people receive a part of the taxes which give rise to the undue weight and bias of the government; but, putting the principle on an average, it is not so bad as they have represented it. Men receive taxes to enable them to pay taxes: and taxes are levied, in part, to pay men for collecting taxes; which two measures counteracting each other, leave men in very nearly the same state as they would be, if there were no taxes, or, perhaps, fewer taxes, to pay; with this important distinction though, that, situated as they now are, they are bound to government for an appointment, which takes away from them every privilege of free-agency and self-direction.

The last evil in our condition, discussed in the Review, is the monopoly of political power by a few persons; by which is meant, it is supposed, that the government of the country is always to be found in the hands of one of two or more classes of persons, who alternately or successively compose the ministry. The party-spirit of the Reviewers here displays itself so as not to be mistaken: they may call the attention of the public to this, as an evil but little understood, and as an evil of alarming magnitude; but it is pretty evident, that their chief concern consists in the circumstance of their own party having been kept out so long, with the exception of its last short span, and that if they could once see it firmly seated in the cabinet, they would have no objection to a deviation from their general rule of short-lived administrations. The existence of the evil has been apparent for many years; but as, by the admission of the Editors, the nomination to all high offices is substantially in the majority of the House of Commons, it follows, of consequence, that a Reform in that House would tend to correct it, as far as necessary. If the members of it would exercise their rightful power, and shew themselves as masters to the ministers, there would be no fear of any evil consequence from a monopoly, which is only to be dreaded when in the possession of incapacity and corruption. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

September 22, 1809. S.

THE EDINBURGH REVIEWERS, AND PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

Sir;—In an elaborate Essay on Parliamentary Reform, published in the last number of the Edinburgh Review, certain doctrines are advanced which are to be regarded as irreconcilable to the principles of the British Constitution, and contrary to truth; and therefore deserving public animadversion.—In that paper it is positively asserted "that a Reform in Parliament would not sensibly diminish the public Expenditure." "With regard to the Taxes" say they (p. 279) "*it appears to us* in the highest degree chimerical to imagine that any change in the plan of Representation should sensibly lessen their amount." The reasoning by which this extraordinary conviction is supported the author does not pretend to rest upon facts. He proceeds with much formality to inform us of what he and his colleagues think would *probably* occur in consequence of reformation, and the conclusion is, that they are "*quite satisfied*" of the inefficacy of Reform, as a remedy for an enormous expenditure. They are "quite satisfied" that Mr. Wardle's retrenchments proposed last session are inexpedient, because they regard measures not of "economy" but "state policy."—And affirm, that the same errors of policy that give rise to "unprofitable expence" at present, may be expected to produce the same effects hereafter; because "there is no good ground for thinking that a parliament chosen mainly on account of its good intentions will commit fewer *blunders* than one selected, in a great degree, from a regard to its *skill* and its *habits of business*." It does not follow, say they, that a reformed parliament, because considerably "more *honest*," than an unreformed one, must also be considerably "*wiser*," and the conclusion seems to be this—that the infamous waste of public money admits of no remedy,—that the Whig party, were they in power, would be disposed to act just as the No Popery administration have acted; and that Sir Francis Burdett, Mr. Wardle, and their friends, are mere visionaries, when they talk of the introduction of honest principles into "state policy."—Now, Sir, I have always been taught to believe, that honesty and fair and candid dealing, are estimable qualities, even in a Statesman, and that, as Mr. Locke informs us, "Politics are only *common sense* applied to national concerns." Honesty and sound policy ever must be inseparable, and that being admitted, it necessarily follows, that the waste and misconduct of those, who openly contemn *honesty*, and who defend publicly and officially the basest corruption, may be remedied, and would be remedied, were men of good principles entrusted with the administration of public affairs.—Let us look back upon the useless expenditure of the present reign, or rather upon a few of the items of which the enormous amount is composed, and say whether a reformed and honest parliament could have possibly sanctioned the waste. Would the true representatives of the people have sanctioned the American war, and the millions expended in order to purchase the heavy loss, and the lasting disgrace which the attempt to enslave our fellow subjects must necessarily entail? Would the true representatives of the people of Great Britain have sanctioned the war against

France, while unoffending; the waste of millions upon millions thrown away as German subsidies? Or, in short, is it to be supposed that the *people* approve of the expence incurred by our late ruinous Expeditions? And are we to be gravely told that the Edinburgh Reviewers are "*quite satisfied* of the inefficacy of Parliamentary Reform to redress these evils?" If a steward cheat his master, if his peculation be discovered, and the injured master propose to turn off the criminal—these gentlemen might say, 'Human nature is always the same, you may get a new steward, but we are *quite satisfied* that he will also cheat you, to the same extent as his predecessor, if he has the same opportunities, and you are to expect nothing beneficial from the change.' Many plausible arguments too might be adduced in support of a doctrine such as this, (for arguments there are against the existence of matter and motion,) but fortunately on such occasions the *common sense* of mankind instantly decides, and when that which is asserted contradicts the uniform experience of mankind, a reply is justly deemed unnecessary: a simple expression of contempt is best suited to the occasion. According to these reviewers, the exertions of a vigilant and honest House of Commons, in the detection and consequent correction of abuses in the public Expenditure, would be attended with no sensible advantage to the public. It would be chimerical to expect it!

But the Reviewer farther asserts, that the prevalence of aristocratical influence is absolutely necessary in the House of Commons, in order to preserve our happy constitution.—"As for altering the composition of the House of Commons by excluding from it all who are sent there by the interest of the ministry or of noble families, we shall only say, that if we believed it *(reform)* likely to produce such an effect, we should think it our duty to strive against it, as against a measure, which would deprive us of the practical blessings of our Constitution." (p. 300).—Again, "Dreadful convulsions would ensue if the three branches of the Legislature were *really* to be kept apart in their practical operations, and to check and controul each other, *not by an infusion of their elementary principles into all the measures of each* (what is this?) but by working separately to thwart or undo what had been undertaken by the other without any means of concert or co-operation.—It is perfectly obvious that if the House of Commons with its absolute power over the supplies, and its connection with the physical force of the nation, were to be composed entirely of the representatives of the yeomanry, of the tradesmen, of burghs, and were to be actuated solely by the feelings and interests which are peculiar to that class of men, it would infallibly convert the Government into a mere democracy; and speedily sweep away the incumbrance of Lords and COMMONS, who could not at all exist, therefore, if they had not an interest in this Assembly. But even supposing that this consequence should not immediately follow, is it not obvious in the second place, that if the House of Lords and the sovereign had no means of influencing the determination of the Commons within their own walls, they could only controul them in their legislative function by throwing out or negativing the bills passed by the unanimous assent of that House?—If the House of Commons were to send up a series of popular Bills which were successively negatived by the sovereign, the consequence would infallibly be an insurrection and a civil war:—And if on the other hand he were to pass as a matter of course every bill which had been voted by a great majority of that House, at the same time that he and his servants had no influence over their deliberations, the controul of the *Executive* would be utterly lost and abandoned, and the Government would be changed into a virtual Republic."

After complimenting Mr. Malcolm Laing as an accurate and *profound* historian, he proceeds to give that gentleman's *rationale* of how King Charles the First came by his misfortunes. "The King, he observes, ruined himself and the country by standing on his prerogative, and neglecting the means of *influencing* the Parliament. He made various efforts, indeed, to seduce and gain over the most formidable of the popular leaders in that Assembly, but he chose most absurdly to proclaim his triumph, by making them immediately desist from that occupation, and enlisting them as the open advocates of his prerogative.—Instead of submitting to receive the popular leaders as his ministers, and in this way bringing all the weight of the royal influence to bear through this commanding channel upon the Parliament, he never promoted them

"to office till they had lost all power and "popularity by an avowed desertion to "the separate party of the King; and thus, "by allowing the Commons to carry every "thing before them in their own House, "and then opposing the *naked walls* of his "prerogative, to the full shock of that *un-*"*bridled* current, he invited a contest that "even in those days proved ruinous to "himself, and to the CONSTITUTION. The "same principle of mis-government, aided "indeed by baser practices on a baser ge-"neration, lasted down till the Revolution, "when, as is UNIVERSALLY acknowledged, "the true principles of the Constitution "were first recognized, and the reign of "*influence* and regular freedom began."

Such is the doctrine of our *soi disant* Whigs, regarding the very basis of the British Constitution, and nothing so impudently false has been published to the world since the Revolution; nothing more disingenuous in statement or more sophistical in argument.—We are here in the first place taught that the Commons of Great Britain are beings of an inferior order to the nobility, not merely in rank and title, but in intellectual endowments and a capacity for business. They are represented as actuated by vulgar feelings and partial interests; incapable of duly appreciating the genuine principles of the British Constitution, and disposed to destroy it, were it not for the salutary controul of the sovereign and peers, who, discerning better the true interests of the nation, keep them quiet by *influence*, that is, Bribery.

It is inculcated that were the King upon all occasions to act as becomes the first magistrate of a free people, and give up his own opinions in deference to the collected wisdom of a whole nation expressed by honest representatives; that then our constitution must be at an end; and a virtual republic established.—It is objected to Charles the First, that to the grossest tyranny he did not add the basest treachery and deceit, and carry his arbitrary measures under the forms of the Constitution; and finally it is asserted that at the Revolution, the true principles of the Constitution were recognized; because then the reign of *Influence* and regular Freedom began, and this is said to be *universally* acknowledged.—Had such doctrines been promulgated fifty years ago, an attempt to answer and refute them seriously, would have been deemed ridiculous. But we live in other times, and while poisons are less guarded against than in former days, it becomes those who are aware of the danger to redouble their diligence in pointing out the proper antidotes to the unwary.—Now I would ask, whether it is really true that the Commons of Great Britain are inferior in any one of those qualities which constitute a competent Legislator? Even as now constituted, is there less information, less political wisdom, to be found in the lower than in the upper House? Is there one of your readers, Sir, who would hesitate to answer in the negative? And the individual who for the time may be King of Great Britain; are we reasonably to expect superior talents and public virtue in him, so that *his* will ought to influence the councils of the nation? The answer is prompt. The Constitution supposes no such thing. The Constitution declares the King to be the chief servant of the State, invested with the insignia of its power, for purposes of public benefit, and entitled to allegiance no longer than he shall act according to Law.—Where then does there appear any sufficient reason why these two Estates should interfere with the third in the exercise of its proper function, the appropriation of money drawn from the pockets of its constituents? Is it not enough that the Crown enjoys its executive power, and a patronage extensive beyond all example, with power also to render even the best measures of the Commons nugatory by a negative? And is it not enough for four or five hundred men distinguished by titles as peers, that they possess privileges and immunities far beyond those of their fellow subjects, and also possess the power of refusing the Bills of the Commons, and thwarting every one of their measures?—The Edinburgh Reviewer says, *No;* all this is not sufficient; there must be in addition to all this a steady and constant influence exerted over the *Commons*, who as foolish and turbulent schoolboys would certainly run into every dangerous excess, were it not for the ever-operating controul of superior minds! But let us enquire into the truth of this assertion, "that *Influence* was recognized at the Revolution, and consequently that the independence of the House of Commons was then understood to be incompatible with *real Freedom.*" What say the honest and eminent men who lived during the Revolution? What say the statesmen of every succeeding year down to our times? It would be to abuse the patience of your readers to re-

cord the opinions of Locke and Addison upon this subject. They were really Whigs, that is friends, to truth and liberty. And although to record their opinions might and would refute the doctrines of the Edinburgh Review, and prove that *Influence* was *not universally recognized* as necessary to the existence of real Freedom; I mean to go farther, and appeal to the recorded opinions of the leading men of the Tory, or high court party, who, if they now lived, would regard with emotions of indignation and contempt the tenets of our modern Whigs.—SWIFT asserts the necessity of annual parliaments, because the frequency of Elections would tend to destroy the influence of the Court, and yet Swift was the very director of a Tory administration.——LORD BOLINGBROKE, not only a Tory but a Jacobite, mentions those who bring forward arguments against the *entire independence* of parliament in terms of the greatest indignation. "*Reason*" (says he,) "is against them, since it is "a plain absurdity to suppose a *con-* "*troul* on the Crown, and to establish "at the same time a *power*, and even a "right, in the Crown to render that con- "troul useless. *Experience* is against them, "since the examples of other countries, "and at some times, of our own, have "proved that a prince may govern ac- "cording to his arbitrary will, or that of "his more arbitrary minister, as abso- "lutely and much more securely *with*, than "*without*, the concurrence of a Parliament. "—*The authority* even the uniform autho- "rity, of our whole Legislature, is against "them——The voice of our *Law* gives "them the *lie*. How then shall we ac- "count for this proceeding, this open and "desperate attack upon our *Constitution*, "and therefore upon our *Liberty?* Have "these *great men* made any *nice* discovery "that escaped the blunt sagacity of our "ancestors, and is above the narrow con- "ceptions of all other men except them- "selves at this time?"

In what noble strains of eloquence the illustrious Earl of Chatham inculcated the necessity of "erecting some strong bar- "riers to defend the Constitution, and resist "the enormous influence of the Crown," your readers well know. Upon a subject of far less importance than the malpractices of Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Perceval, he in his place declared the Constitution violated: "and until," said he, "that wound is healed, it is in vain to re- "commend union to parliament, or endea- "vour to promote concord among the "people. If we mean seriously to unite "the nation, we must convince them that "their complaints are regarded, that their "injuries shall be redressed.—On *that* "foundation I will take the lead in re- "commending peace and harmony to the "people; on any other I would never "wish to see them united again. If the "breach in the Constitution be effectually "repaired, the people will of themselves "return to a state of tranquillity. If not, "may discord prevail for ever?—I feel the "principles of an Englishman, and I utter "them without apprehension or reserve. "——If the King's servants will not per- "mit a constitutional question to be de- "cided on according to the forms and on "the principles of the Constitution, it "must then be decided in some other "manner; and rather than it should be "given up, rather than the nation should "surrender their birthright to a despotic "minister, I hope, my Lords, old as I am, "*I shall see the question fairly brought to issue,* "*and tried between the people and the Go-* "*vernment.*——We must reconcile the "practice of parliament to its theory, and "remove all just cause of complaint."

But even so late as the year 1797 it was not discovered by the Whig Party, that corruption and influence are necessary to the well being of our Constitution, and may be openly avowed and defended. On the discussion of Mr. Grey's Motion for Reform, Mr. Fox said, "When Go- "vernment is daily presenting itself in the "shape of weakness that borders on dis- "solution—unequal to all the functions of "useful strength, and formidable only in "pernicious corruption, weak in power and "strong only in *influence:* am I to be told "that such a state of things can go on "with safety to any branch of the Consti- "tution? If men think that under such "a system, we can go on without a mate- "rial recurrence to first principles, they "argue in direct opposition to all theory "and all practice. But it is said, What "will this Reform do for us? Will it re- "trieve our misfortunes?—I admit that "it would not be sufficient, unless it led "to *reduction of substantial expence*, and to "reform all the abuses that have crept "into our government.—But I think it "would do this.—It would give us in "the first place a parliament vigilant and "scrupulous, and that would secure us a "government active and economical. It "would prepare the way for every ra-

"tional improvement of which, without "disturbing the parts, our Constitution is "susceptible." And concluding——"Sir, "I have done—I have given my advice. "I propose the remedy, and fatal will it be "for England if pride and prejudice much "longer continue to oppose it. The re- "medy proposed is simple, easy, and practi- "cable; it does not touch the vitals of "the Constitution, and, I sincerely believe, "will restore us to peace and harmony. "Do not believe that the day is far distant "when Parliamentary Reform *must* take "place, and is it not better to come to it "now while you have the power of deli- "beration, than when it may be extorted "from you by convulsion? There is yet "time—it may yet go to the people "with the grace and favour of a sponta- "neous act.—What will it be if extorted "from you with indignation and vio- "lence?"——How different the sentiments of these great men from those promulgated in this Review! And it deserves remark that although a profligate minister or his supporters may have sometimes used arguments somewhat similar in debates, yet no man since the Revolution has openly avowed such doctrines before the public, or told the people of Great Britain in plain language, and in a printed book, that it is necessary they should be *bribed*. A paper upon Parliamentary Reform, such as I have just animadverted upon, is not however calculated to do much mischief; provided it be attentively considered. A kind of lawyer-like plausibility appears on the surface, but upon closer inspection it wants consistency, it wants authority, and, worst of all, it is not supported by facts. It is, in short, such as we might expect from a young member of the Edinburgh Speculative Society, who is ready with much petulance to support either side of the plainest question, and much resembles the "lax pleadings," which Lord Grenville informs us are permitted at the Scotch Bar, and which are defined to be "the assumption of that for true, which is in reality false, as a basis, with a superstructure of sophistry and nonsense." I am, Sir, &c. A SCOTCHMAN.

Piccadilly, Sept. 28, 1809.

SPECIAL JURIES.

SIR;—I am desirous of drawing your attention aside for a few moments from that grand desideratum, Parliamentary Reform, to the consideration of a topic very little inferior in point of interest, if not closely connected with it, and which I am confident you cherish as of vital importance to the existence of the liberty and independence of Englishmen; I mean Trial by Jury. Amidst all the encroachments which our constitutional establishments have suffered, Trial by Jury has perhaps best endured the shock; and as I should hope that that bloated monster Corruption, will be reduced to a stature of seasonable growth, by the wholesome regimen with which you weekly supply him, I entertain a confidence that Trial by Jury will preserve its wonted superiority, and that it will be found uniformly composed of impartial, independent, and uncontaminated members of society. I have reason to believe, Mr. Cobbett, that the ordinary or petit Jury, is composed of *boni homines;* "twelve good men and true," and that justice is very independently and fairly administered by this tribunal; but, Sir, as it is a wise and wholesome principle in our constitution, that every man shall be tried by his equals; or as Magna Charta emphatically has it, that no freeman shall be hurt either in his person or property, "nisi per legale judici- "um parium suorum vel per legem terræ," it follows that in all cases an ordinary Jury is not the proper and best tribunal, and the earliest periods of our judicial establishments have therefore recognized the expediency of a superior, or what is termed a "Special Jury": Blackstone says, that Special Juries were introduced, "when the causes were of too great nicety for the discussion of ordinary freeholders, or where the Sheriff was suspected of partiality;" and he might have added, where the situation in life of the party, (upon the maxim of "judicium parium" or judgment of equals,) requires a more select tribunal. The utility of such select Jury is in many cases manifest. No man, for instance, who had a dispute with a builder, about an exorbitant charge for his house, would think himself very candidly dealt with, if his cause were to be decided by a Jury engaged in a similar branch of trade; still less would a gentleman of fortune, possessing liberal sentiments and entertaining a strong sense of honour, submit to the consideration of twelve mechanics, how far his character, peace and happiness, had been invaded by an unprincipled seducer, who under the mask of a friend had dishonoured his wife; I say, no man would feel content to be tried for an in-

fraction of the revenue laws, by a Jury of excisemen or custom-house officers. It was to prevent these inconsistencies, that a Special Jury, which it was formerly discretionary with the Judges to grant, (though I believe seldom, if ever, refused on application by either party,) was given to the subject as matter of right by the 3 Geo. 2, c. 25. Now, Mr. Cobbett, considering the object with which Special Juries are usually in request, it must be quite manifest, that those who are summoned for the purpose, should be of a superior class to shopkeepers; that they should not only be freeholders, but men of liberal education, unshackled with the trammels of trade: for instance, if I had particular grounds for not wishing my cause to come under the investigation of a farrier, or if you please a veteriuary surgeon, would such a man be less objectionable, because he happened to possess a freehold estate? Can such an adventitious circumstance operate to qualify a man to sit upon a Special Jury, who on all other accounts should be completely disqualified and unfit for the office: but the very designation given to Special Jurymen, shews the true ground of distinction between them and a common Jury; for they are in all proceedings; in the pannel, and in the Sheriff's Freeholder's Book, denominated "esquires." What constitutes, let me ask, an esquire, if it be not a property independent of labour, and of exertion, and the possessing those liberal principles and that extensive mind, which are presumed to be acquired from the leisure which independence affords? Professions confer a like title on their members, from the presumption that the exercise of the profession requires a more cultivated understanding, than is the lot of ordinary life: but so jealous is the constitution of the qualification necessary to a Special Juryman, that landed property is stated as an indispensible appurtenant. Now, Mr. Cobbett, these observations bring me to the conclusion, to which I have been anxious to draw your attention, viz. that nothing can be so preposterous, so complete a perversion of the spirit of the institution of a Special Jury, as that of denominating men esquires, and introducing them as qualified persons in the Sheriff's Book, merely because they possess a small landed property, though their daily vocations be within the walls of a manufactory, or the circuit of a mahogany counter; and yet, Mr. Cobbett, that this outrage to common sense does exist, is a fact beyond all dispute; for I assure you I am not speaking ironically when I state, that such persons are promiscuously mingled in the Sheriff's Book, with men of fortune and character, and are constantly summoned on Special Juries, to discharge a duty in which most frequently they are totally unfit, and are by no means the class of persons the law intended to cast into that situation. It was only the other day, Mr. Cobbett, that it fell within my observation, that in a cause of the first moment, as it regarded the character and feelings of a gentleman concerned, and in which, to do justice, it was indispensibly necessary that a Special Jury, as was the case, should be empannelled; I say, Mr. Cobbett, it fell within my observation, that the very Foreman of this Jury was—an Undertaker. Now, I am sure, Mr. Cobbett, you will not attribute my remarks to any thing intentionally contumelious or sarcastic, towards any class of men because they happen to be in trade: I know that the trading part of this country, is one of the sources of its opulence; I know that trade and agriculture constitute the sinews of the state; I admit all this; I do not object to the accustomed habits of mankind, requiring that we should be trimmed in a peculiar fashion, preparatory to our being handed over as a savoury dish to the worms; I do not complain that any usage should have made it necessary to hire distorted countenances, to "mimic sorrow when the heart's not sad;" I complain not of this, nor of those who follow the employment; but I do complain of that violation of public duty which induces a sheriff to introduce such men, as competent to serve on a Special Jury, and who, to sanction the impropriety, gives them the designation of esquires.—Mr. Cobbett, it may be said, that the law has pointed out no other criterion of a Special Juryman, than that he should possess landed property to a certain amount; but does not the obvious reasoning upon the subject; does not the observations of all legal authorities; does not Blackstone, when he says that the utility of a Special Jury, is, when the causes are of too great nicety for the discussion of ordinary freeholders; does not the whole clearly shew what sort of men the sheriff ought to receive, and what to reject for this purpose? The result is quite evident, and admits of no ambiguity. It may be pleaded that the present practice of the

sheriff is agreeable to that of his predecessors, and that his predecessors were never the subject of complaint; to obviate then, Mr. Cobbett, some disadvantage arising from the defect of this system for the future, and without any incroachment on the usage of prior sheriffs, I would propose that until some more defined and permanent alteration shall take place, the sheriff do, in addition to the names, state the occupations of those persons, who are concerned in trade, and at the same time, specify the place where the business is conducted; this will be giving a publicity extremely requisite for those who are concerned in the appointment of Special Juries, and may obviate considerable injustice and inconvenience, until something more advantageous can be adopted. Mr. Cobbett, I regard this as a subject of weighty import; and, as I am acquainted with no publication where questions of magnitude receive more attention from the enlightened and independent part of mankind, than in your Register, I hope these crude comments will be permitted by you, to meet the public eye in that work, and that the insertion will be productive of public benefit. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

Lincoln's Inn. W. F. S.

JUBILEE.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONDON, *Tuesday, September* 26, 1809.

Mr. Alderman WOOD, as Chairman of the Committee appointed to consider of the most proper means of celebrating the ensuing Anniversary of his Majesty's Accession to the Throne, presented their Report. It stated in substance, as the opinion of the Committee, "That the Corporation should attend Divine Service at "St. Paul's Cathedral; that they should "afterwards proceed to St. James's with "a Congratulatory Address to his Majesty, and that the front of Guildhall "should be illuminated," but it was the unanimous opinion of the Committee, "That it was neither expedient nor necessary that the Corporation should dine "together on that day." Mr. Alderman Wood then said that, although as Chairman of the Committee, he had felt it his duty to sign the Report, he by no means conceived himself pledged to the support of the propositions which it contained. So far was he from agreeing to the principle, that he held in his hand copies of two motions, which, however, it was not his intention to press, which were in direct opposition to the recommendation of the Report. As to the Dinner, he had certainly attended the Committee with the express view of opposing that. He had not the slightest objection to attending at St. Paul's; nor to going up with an Address, provided that it was not made the vehicle of political opinions. The Illumination he had steadily opposed, as improper in every point of view: To preserve the peace of the City was highly important; and no man could be so blind as not to perceive that, although the resolution of the Committee confined it to the front of Guildhall, the illumination there would be the signal for a general and compulsory one throughout this immense metropolis.—The situation of the kingdom was, in every point of view, such as to render a General Illumination little better than a general insult. With what sincerity could those persons obey the mandate to illuminate, whose children, parents, relatives, and friends, had perished in Spain, or were dying in the hospitals at Walcheren? He hoped that the feelings and good sense of the Corporation would induce them totally to give up the idea of illuminating. In presenting the Report, he felt it incumbent on him to move that such Report should be received, and the recommendations contained in it adopted: but he should hold himself at liberty to state his objections to such parts of it as he deemed objectionable, before the question was finally put.

Mr. HERNE expressed much dissatisfaction at the Report, which, in his opinion, was directly contrary to the sentiments of that Court, when the Committee was appointed. But nothing better could be expected from a Committee, in which, with the grossest inconsistency, gentlemen had been appointed who were known to be against a Jubilee altogether. The propositions were absurd and monstrous; first, they were to go to Church, and then they were to go to Court, and then they were to go quietly about their business. Was this a testimony of respect from a Corporation so noted for their love of good eating and drinking? Instead of meeting together, and enjoying a good substantial dinner, and a glass of good old port, that it should be said of the Citizens of London, that they sneaked home, and finished the day on a mutton chop, was most monstrous, and would never be believed by

posterity. It was inconsistent with the dignity of the Corporation, and calculated to throw an odium on all their proceedings on this important occasion. It had been said that attempts were made to bring politics into the discussion. Gentlemen had indeed now made it a political question, and that of the highest importance.

Mr. Alderman SCHOLEY was of opinion that the Committee ought to have prepared an Address, and presented it to the Court for their consideration, together with the Report.

Mr. GRIFFITHS observed, that he was one of those who had signed the Report, and he could not help observing, that Mr. Herne had been prejudging others by the measure of his own conduct. The duty of that Gentleman had very often called for his attendance at Church, where he (Mr. G.) did not, however, remember to have seen him.—[Here the coarse exclamation of "*that's a falsity,*" was heard, on which there was a general cry of Order, accompanied by very strong expressions of indignation.] He (Mr. G.) had as much loyalty as any man, although it had been insinuated that the Committee, if not disloyal, had recommended measures by which the City of London would be disgraced. But in his opinion, the Committee had recommended those measures, which, if adopted, would do honour to the City of London. Was a dinner the *sine qua non* of a Meeting of the Corporation of the City of London? Could not even the solemn act of returning thanks to God for the lengthened life of his Majesty be performed, without a succeeding feast? Was eating and drinking indispensably connected with every act of the Citizens of London in their corporate capacity? He was ashamed to hear sentiments so degrading, so humiliating to the City, which, he trusted, the good sense of that Court would rescue from the imputation of habitual characteristic gluttony.

Mr. S. DIXON was of opinion that the recommendations of the Committee in the Report should be discussed separately. With respect to a dinner, he was not one of those who could see any offence to the Almighty in eating a good dinner, or in drinking a few glasses of good red port (Applauses). The greatest proof of our love, regard, and adoration, was chearfulness; and the most effectual way to promote that was, in his opinion, by a good substantial dinner, and a glass of good wine, a motion for which he would second with all his heart and with all his soul (Applauses). Mr. Dixon concluded by moving that the Report be read clause by clause.

Mr. WAITHMAN said, that although he had attended the Committee, and put his name to the Report, he felt himself wholly at liberty to object to any of the recommendations contained in it. With respect to the first observation made by a Member of that Court (Mr. Hearn), that many gentlemen were appointed to the Committee who were not favourable to its objects, he should answer, that at least four-fifths of the Members of the Committee were composed of gentlemen of the other side, and that it had always been the custom of that Court not to choose their Committee entirely from one party. It was somewhat extraordinary that Mr. Hearn, who was himself a Member of that Committee, and attended its proceedings, should now find such serious objections to the Report, although he had never stated these objections in the Committee. By his attendance, however, in the Committee, he must have known that the Resolutions of the present Report had been prepared not by him, but by a worthy gentleman (Mr. Clarke), who very often differed from him in that Court. An honourable and most loyal baronet (Sir W. Curtis) did not attend at the Committee, and was also absent on the present occasion. This absence shewed pretty clearly that there was a point, beyond which the loyalty of the hon. baronet would not carry him. He, for his part, had gone so much at large into the subject on a former occasion, that he felt some reluctance now to trouble the Court at any length; but, although he hoped that he had briefly brought many most important subjects under their consideration, still there were many essential points which he had overlooked.—When he mentioned to some of his friends, before the last Court, that it was his intention to come forward and express his sincere opinion upon the subject, they most earnestly dissuaded him from doing it. It was not that they were not perfectly aware of the artful contrivance from which the business originated; they were not ignorant of the calamities which have befallen the country during the present reign; or of the foolery of calling for a day of rejoicing in a period of unexampled affliction. They knew that the object of the contrivance was to set up a

cry of loyalty, and throw the odium of disloyalty upon every one who ventured to express a difference of opinion. Notwithstanding this advice, he had determined to speak his opinion. Whatever odium there might be attached to opposing an artificial cry of loyalty, he had never been afraid of encountering it. As to popularity, if he should earn it, he would be content to wear it; but he never did, nor ever would decline speaking his real sentiments from any view connected with obtaining popularity. He did feel some self-applause in recollecting that he had resisted a cry which was set up from interested motives, and that he had preferred the risk of being unpopular, to the desertion of his duty in that Court as a Representative of the City of London. With respect to going to Church, he thought that was a very proper thing; but still he was a little surprised at the quarter from which it was proposed. As to the congratulatory Address, he declared that he was utterly at a loss to conceive what topics of congratulation could be selected, and he should think it a most puzzling thing to shape any Address of Congratulation without filling it with the most gross and infamous falsehoods. When his majesty first ascended the throne, we were a free, happy, and united people, and our public affairs were managed by the great Lord Chatham, the ablest Minister this country ever produced. The taxes then amounted to very little more than seven millions annually, whereas they have now increased to seventy millions. In the commencement of the reign, the union and happiness of the people were much disturbed by the squabbles of the government. During Mr. Wilkes's time, or until the commencement of the American war, he could see no subject of congratulation. Passing over then the earlier years of his majesty's reign, and coming directly to the American war, he must say that this was one of the most wicked and calamitous wars that ever the country had been engaged in; that all the objects of the war, and America itself, were lost; and that the debt of this country was increased to a prodigious extent. He could say more——that he believed that all the evils which have overrun the Continent of Europe, and reduced this country to great danger, might be directly traced to the wicked policy which dictated the American war. He therefore could not see room for congratulating his majesty on that portion of his reign which went down to the dismemberment of the empire, and the loss of America. If we were to come to more modern times, and look at the history of the last 16 years, we should find that this country has been involved in a most bloody and calamitous war, for an object which the people never understood. The country knew when their fleets were in port, and when they were not; but they never knew what it was that they were fighting for. The calamitous events of these bloody, expensive, and disastrous wars, were certainly not subjects to congratulate his majesty upon. Were they to congratulate his majesty upon the frequent suspension of the Habeas Corpus act, and of the constitution, during his reign? Could we congratulate his majesty upon the Treason and Sedition bills, in consequence of which many unfortunate young men suffered the most severe punishment, for merely repeating what had been said with greater force at a former period, by the very ministers who recommended the prosecution? If we were to return thanks to Almighty God, merely for prolonging the life of his majesty, we could not congratulate our sovereign for having escaped bodily infirmity, nor yet could we congratulate him on his family, or on the success of the measures of his government. After such unexampled failures as the country has lately witnessed, it should rather be a time for the City to go up and point out to his majesty the cause of these failures, than to fix this as a time to have a day of rejoicing. At the conclusion of the last war against France, after having incurred a fresh debt of 200 millions, the nation was informed by the Secretary at War (Mr. Windham), that "although we had gained battles, the objects of the war were lost and that Europe was gone." Was it then for a war, attended with such expence, and so unfortunate in its results, that his majesty should be congratulated? Or was it for the events of the present war, the Convention of Cintra, the unfortunate occurrences in Spain, or the Expedition to Walcheren, the most disgraceful one that was to be found in the annals of the country; that a congratulation was to be voted? He might therefore ask, what portion was it of his majesty's long reign, which we could fix upon as the period for a complimentary address? If the address of the City had been attended to on a former occasion, and a proper inquiry instituted

respecting the shameful Convention of Cintra, the country would, probably, not have now to lament the loss which we have sustained in Spain, from the hasty advance and precipitate retreat of lord viscount Wellington. Now, although the Convention of Cintra had been felt as most disgraceful to this country, yet there was no man hardy enough to stand up and say, that in this, that, or any other failure, which is recorded in the annals of British history, was any thing near so disgraceful and calamitous, as the last and most infamous Expedition, which was entrusted to lord Chatham. There was nobody that would say, that the Income Tax, and the extension of the Excise laws, were subjects upon which his majesty should be congratulated. As to the conduct of our military affairs, it was so extremely bad, that although we have double the number of Generals on our staff that Buonaparté has, and maintained, probably, at four times the expence, yet when it comes to select Generals for the command of our Expeditions, we select a Whitelocke, a Dalrymple, or a Chatham. Could the court see with indifference the waste of British blood which was occasioned by the folly of those who planned, or who had the execution of the objects of our Expeditions? It had been said, and very truly, that the valour of our soldiers and sailors had been conspicuous in the late wars. If so, the greater blame rested upon the Government. If we had soldiers who would not fight, the wisest Government might fail in its objects; but when it is known that we have a brave army and navy, that will execute well whatever they are called upon to do, the blame will rest exclusively on the Government, which, by the absurdity of its plans, and its selection of officers, makes British valour useless, and causes torrents of British blood to flow for no purpose. Among the many faults of the Government, he would maintain, that although we had 38 Ambassadors, who received 54,000*l.* per ann. in pensions, in addition to their pay, yet in the very few courts in which they would be received, it was almost always found that they were completely ignorant of their duty. We had lately an example of this in America; and in Sweden, although every other man in the country knew a Revolution was probable, the British Ambassador alone appeared to know nothing of the matter. There never was a great country whose affairs had been so ill managed as the affairs of this country: and yet ministers shewed great abilities in some things. They could easily discover all the means that would prevent surcharges from being evaded; and yet they never could discover the means by which the country's affairs in other respects could be managed with honour. At the very time that the taxes were to be levied with the utmost rigour, accounts to the amount of nine millions of money were yet unsettled at the Victualling-office; and above seven millions of West India accounts were yet unexamined, notwithstanding the expence of the Commissioners appointed for that purpose. In the very last year, above nine millions were added to the yearly expenditure; and when it was considered, that from the year 1797 to the present year, the taxes had increased from twenty-three millions annually to seventy millions, without gaining a single object for which we entered into the war, he could not see how his majesty could be congratulated on such calamitous events. It was evidently impossible for the country to go on much longer under such a progressive and enormous accumulation of public burdens. Those Gentlemen on the other side, who were always calling for unanimity in that Court, were acting inconsistently when they brought forward motions which must necessarily disturb that unanimity. He had himself for the whole of his political life, opposed, as far as he was able, the system which had brought so many calamities on the country. For the greater part of that time he had been buffeted and hunted down as a Jacobin, and for many years he could only prevail on five Members to divide with him. He nowever had never turned to the right hand or the left; but regardless of whatever odium the Gentlemen on the other side might excite against him, he had fearlessly pursued through life, and he should always continue to do it, that line of conduct which his sense of public duty pointed out [loud applauses below the Bar. The Lord Mayor called the Gentlemen to order]. These applauses were certainly irregular, and he was happy to say that it was an irregularity which did not often take place. There were, however, occasions when it was hard for men to conceal their feelings; and such demonstrations had been heard, sometimes, in the House of Commons itself. There were many Gentlemen in that Court who agreed with him in the most essential points; and yet, because there were some

shades of difference, they, upon many occasions, threw themselves into the arms of the enemy.—Nothing could be more mischievous or dangerous than such a course. Mr. Fox had elegantly observed, in his History, that "it was much better to con-"cede something to a friend, than every "thing to an enemy." He wished that those, who on important points thought as he did, were impressed with the truth of this sentiment. As to many of the Gentlemen on the other side, he might as well talk to stocks or stones, as to address them with any hopes of convincing them. They were evidently playing a game of their own; they were fishing for themselves, while he had nothing to hope for or to fear from any Government, and had never obtained or sought any favours. He was very much astonished that a Gentleman who had given notice of a motion for the present day (Mr. Deputy Kemble), should now feel differently from what he did upon the Convention of Cintra:—On that occasion he mentioned, "that his blood boiled "with indignation, and that he was ready "to go up to his majesty every week with "a remonstrance on the subject." That burning zeal, however, must have now considerably cooled. The City of London could shew no better proof of its loyalty to its Sovereign upon the present occasion, than by pointing out to him those enemies who had brought such disgraces and dangers upon the country. An hon. and loyal baronet (sir W. Curtis) had, upon a former occasion, complained of his personality; but he did not at that time recollect for what number of years he (Mr. W.) had been exposed to the personalities of the hon. baronet and his friends. He had, perhaps, forgotten, that when he was in a minority on the question of the Treason and Sedition Bills, Gentlemen insisted upon a division in order that it might be seen "who were the enemies of the country." As to what was called the monied interest, although he was himself a tradesman, he would never look much to the monied interest to support constitutional principles; nor to Bank Directors, who can get Acts of Parliament to prevent them paying their notes in cash, and who receive 5 per cent. for interest on a bit of paper intrinsically not worth a penny. On this subject he read the following passage from a Speech of Lord Chatham, on the question of the Falkland Islands:—

"There is a set of men, my Lords, in "the City of London, who are known to "live in riot and luxury upon the plunder "of the ignorant, the innocent, the help-"less—upon that part of the community "which stands most in need of, and best "deserves, the care and protection of the "Legislature. To me, my Lords, whether "they be the miserable jobbers of Change-"alley, or the lofty Asiatic plunderers of "Leadenhall-street, they are all equally "detestable. I care but little whether a "man walks on foot, or is drawn by eight "horses, or six horses; if his luxury be "supported by the plunder of his country, "I despise and detest him. My Lords, "while I had the honour of serving his "Majesty, I never ventured to look at the "Treasury, but at a distance; it is a busi-"ness I am unfit for, and to which I never "could have submitted. The little I know "of it has not served to raise my opinion "of what is vulgarly called the monied in-"terest. I mean, that blood-sucker, that "muck-worm, which calls itself the friend "of Government—that pretends to serve "this or that Administration, and may be "purchased, on the same terms, by any "Administration—that advances money "to Government, and takes special care of "its own emoluments. Under this de-"scription I include the whole race of "Commissaries, Jobbers, Contractors, "Clothiers, and Remitters!!!"

Had these most pertinent observations been made by himself (Mr. W.,) he doubtless had been charged with Jacobinism of the deepest dye—but they were sentiments of the great Chatham, the determined foe of corruption in whatever shape it reared its head [Hear! hear!]. He well knew, as we also all well knew, or might well know, that these men were set up to sale to every Administration. No Administration, be it composed of who it might, could ever be at a loss to raise a loan, whilst such characters as lord Chatham had described were in existence. After Mr. Pitt retired, his successors were invited most cordially to partake of Civic Hospitality. Even Lord Grey, who had for years been opposing Mr. Pitt's system, no sooner came into power than he was invited into the City. Of this disposition to servile adulation he might adduce instances without end, which he should not detain the Court by recapitulating—but proceed to read his Amendment, which was as follows:—"That this "Court and the Country at large have "upon all occasions evinced their loyalty "and attachment to his Majesty's Person "and Family, and duly impressed with a

"sense of the eminent virtues which have "so long endeared him to his people, they "will at all times be ready to testify their "loyalty and attachment.—That the Peo- "ple,distinguishing between the beneficent "views and intentions of the Monarch, "and the profligate acts of incapable and "unprincipled advisers, who have abused "the confidence of their Sovereign, have "not suffered the destructive measures "which have produced such an accumula- "tion of calamitous events—the frauds, "corruption, and peculation, which have "so long existed—nor the wanton and "wasteful sacrifice of blood and treasure— "in any manner to diminish the love and "affection which they have borne his Ma- "jesty, firmly persuaded that these events "must have been equally afflicting to his "Majesty and the People.—They are "therefore of opinion, that during the pre- "sent gloomy aspect of public affairs, "amidst their recent afflicting losses and "disappointments, and the present dis- "tracted state of his Majesty's Councils, "to set any day apart as a day of public "rejoicing, could neither be gratifying to "his Majesty, or an appropriate way of "testifying their loyalty, nor would it ac- "cord with the character of a free, grave, "and considerate people, feeling deeply "for the honour and character of the coun- "try."—Mr. Waithman concluded a most able speech (of which we have been unable to give more than a hasty and imperfect sketch,) by avowing, that although he should at all times be most ready to testify his love and attachment to his Sovereign personally, he trusted that he should never hesitate in discriminating between the acts of the King himself and those of his advisers.

The Common Serjeant then read the original Motion and the Amendment.

Mr. Mawman lamented that the Court was not unanimous on this important occasion; he was, however, somewhat relieved from the pressure of that feeling, by reflecting that the worthy member who now opposed the Resolution before the Court, had signed the Report which contained it. He himself did not, however, agree to the Report altogether, although he did to this Resolution, which was that of the Court going to St. Paul's, to hear divine service. But, as to another part of the Report, which stated that a Dinner was neither expedient nor necessary on that occasion, it was a proposition from which he dissented, and he had another to make in lieu of it. As to the expence of a Dinner, he admitted that to be a considerable object, and that expence should be avoided as much as possible in the present state of the finances of the City; but they must retrench in something else to make up for expence on this occasion, which, he believed, would only amount to about 1,000*l*. He should propose, with his lordship's leave, that the Corporation should dine at the Egyptian Hall. Nor was the state of the finances of the Corporation so low as not to admit of this expenditure without much inconvenience, for its annual capital was larger than it had been formerly; besides, a Committee might be appointed to conduct the business of the Dinner, and do it for nothing, which would considerably diminish the expence; he should be glad to afford any assistance he could render in that way gratis. It was, with him, a first principle that the Corporation should pass that day as a feast, and also that the feast should be held at our Mansion-House. It had been asked, by a worthy member (Mr. Waithman), what there was to rejoice for? To which he answered, a great deal; for, during the present reign, much had been done to improve the condition of society at large; the *public roads* had been improved; we had had an immensequantity of *inclosures*. Let us look at the face of the country in general, and see whether it was approaching that ruin which the worthy member seemed to predict. Look at the state of your manufactures and your produce, your agriculture, your arts, fine and mechanic; look at your army and navy, and then see the progress which society had made in its condition within these ten years; the peace which we had enjoyed; and then he was inclined to think we should arrive to the conclusion, that, generally speaking, society was never in so flourishing a condition as at the present moment.—It might be said, that we could not attribute all these matters to his majesty; but without the benignity of his reign they might have been checked and prevented; besides, it was but fair to take this view of things, as others had taken such a view of the ills of the present reign. He therefore saw much matter of congratulation to his majesty on account of his reign. He considered our Constitution a matter of great congratulation; it was a happy and glorious Constitution, the principles of which his majesty had uniformly supported for fifty years to-

gether. Therefore, he flattered himself, that the sense of the Court was, instead of using the language of complaint, to indulge in that approbation.

Mr. S. Dixon lamented that gentlemen had wandered so much as they had done from the question before the Court, which was simply—Whether the Court should, or should not, go to St. Paul's to hear divine service on the 25th of October next, and return thanks to Almighty God? He had heard a speech of an hour long, from one member (Mr. Waithman), without containing a single word to the question. That worthy member had talked a great deal too much of himself. *Who* and *what* was *he*—that he should engross so much of the Court upon *his* affairs—*his* character—*his* circumstances—that he should thus talk so much of himself for himself. Here Mr. Dixon wittily introduced the old jingle of "As I walked to myself, I talked to myself," &c. which he repeated with great emphasis and violent gesticulation, to the no small diversion of the whole Court. As to the matter now more immediately before the Court, he had the pleasure to say, because he had the pleasure to feel, there was abundant matter for congratulation to our sovereign lord the King, for his happy reign of 50 years over a loyal and affectionate people.

Mr. Alderman Goodbehere saw the propriety of separating the personal from the magisterial character of the king. There was a wide difference between the moral character of the man, and the office which he holds; and to attribute to him things which were not produced by him, was to come to a conclusion without premises, and to a false conclusion. Such, he considered to be the attributing to the king the state of the public roads, the state of the manufactures, of commerce, of agriculture, of the arts, of the army, and the navy. These were not produced by the reign of the king, although they happened in the reign of the king; they were the effect of the industry and diligence of the people; and if the worthy member who had brought forward these subjects attended to that distinction, he would not have arrived at the conclusion of attributing them to his majesty. They were the result of the energy and the activity of the people. The way to judge this question rightly, was to look at the transactions of the present reign, and then we should find many things done by those whom his majesty had entrusted with his councils, which not only were unfit subjects of congratulation, but such as must excite our abhorrence. Let us look at the extension of the hateful Excise laws; at the odious and inquisitorial Income Tax; at the huge, the monstrous size of the National Debt, the collection of the taxes to defray the interest of which had spread court influence and corruption into almost every branch of society, civil or military. Look at the waste of treasure and of blood, which had attended a reign of 49 years, thirty of which had been war; during which 26 Bishops, whose duty it was to preach the mildness of the Christian religion which was "good will to men," yet lent their aid, as Lords of Parliament, to a system of havoc and devastation all over Europe, and an immense portion of India; and also over a vast space of America. It was, therefore not enough to say that our roads, our trade, our commerce, our agriculture, our arts, were flourishing, we must look also at the calamities of the people: at the fatal policy which brought on those calamities. He should not now take up the time of the Court in enumerating them, but they were numerous; and some of them were at this moment, to him, awful and alarming; he knew the people at large felt them in that light; and the Court, in his opinion, ought to take care not to bring, as it were, a question between the king and his people, by thus injudiciously obtruding upon the public, a grave recollection of these calamitous events. Sound sense and wise policy would have shunned a discussion of these matters at this crisis. For God's sake, let the Court do nothing that had a tendency to commotion. Things are, at present, tolerably quiet over the country; discussion may disturb them. An illumination was the very worst project that could be devised. Lights might, indeed, be set in people's windows, but unless we could infuse chearfulness into their hearts, the illumination would do them no good. This was not such a season as that of the news from Egypt or Trafalgar. They were, indeed, subjects fit for illumination. But this was to commemorate, by a Jubilee, the whole of a reign, which had been marked by most afflicting calamities; by the extension of the detestable Excise Laws; by suspensions of the act of Habeas Corpus, the bulwark of the liberty of the subject; by the prodigious waste of blood and treasure; by an increase of the National Debt from 100 to 800 millions. With these

views of things, it appeared to him, that we deceived ourselves, if we thought this a season for a Jubilee, for, to him, the situation of the country appeared to be truly calamitous.

Mr. KEMBLE did not agree with every part of the Resolutions before the Court, but with the first part he did agree. He could not help being surprised at the conduct of a worthy member (Mr. Waithman), for he had signed the very report which he was now attacking. He never would have put his name to what he disapproved; he thought this conduct disingenuous in that gentleman, and done to lull the Court into a delusive apprehension of security, the better to defeat its purpose, which was almost unanimously holding a Jubilee.

Mr. WAITHMAN said, his object in signing the Report was, to bring forward the discussion of the subject; the report was not his act, but the act of the Committee. He made no observations in the Committee; he did not exchange a word with any individual in it, until a question was put to him respecting the Dinner, and then he said distinctly, that he disapproved of that measure.

The question was then put on the Resolution for going to hear Divine Service, and to return thanks to the Almighty God, on the 25th of October next; and carried.

Mr. KEMBLE then observed, that the next question was upon the subject of Illumination. Such was the *loyalty* of the people, that he had no doubt, whether the Court ordered an illumination of the front of Guildhall, or not, the illumination would be general. The Court might expect that the Mansion-house, the India-house, and the Bank, should illuminate on that occasion; but there was no necessity for the Court to recommend it to individuals, for their *loyalty* was such, that they would do it without any suggestion from any quarter. He was aware of the pressure of taxes, but such was the *loyalty* of the people of this country, that he was confident they would bear still more without a murmur, in support of his Majesty and his Government; but as the people were so ready to pay their money, the Court should not shew a readiness to take it out of their pockets.

Mr. WHEBLE thought the Police of the City defective enough already, without any Illumination, which would create much confusion; but defective as the Police of the City was, there was this consolation, that the Police of the West end of the Town was a great deal worse, witness the tumult and uproar of Covent Garden Theatre for a week together. Nor were peace, and quietness, and obedience to the laws, much recommended by the Duel which lately took place between two Secretaries of State, and Members of the King's Cabinet; for these reasons we understood the worthy Member's sentiments to be adverse to an Illumination.

Mr. Alderman WOOD advised the Court to look to the price of bread, rather than talk about Illumination. He disliked this proposition to illuminate Guildhall, because it would have the effect of compulsion on all the householders of the metropolis; for there were persons in abundance who were ready to break such windows as should not be illuminated.

Mr. MILLAR considered the whole of this measure of a Jubilee as a *mere trick* intended for the purpose of screening Ministers from an inquiry into their conduct, which was most culpable. He considered an Illumination as the most injudicious step that could be taken, even by those who most wished to render this reign illustrious; because it would afford opportunities to those who thought otherwise, to contrast the present condition of things with that of the end of the last reign. The illumination reminded him of what was said in the once popular entertainment of Harlequin Touchstone. The character in that piece is supposed to possess a talisman, by the application of which Truth is instantly elicited. Amongst other places which he visited was Paris, where the people were illuminating the city. Harlequin, on inquiring the cause of this illumination, is informed that it was for a great victory; but, on applying the touchstone, he discovers that this illumination was for the purpose of *keeping the People in the dark*. Thus, for instance, an invidious person might put up in one window, National Debt, 100 millions; in another, 800 millions. In one, the price of the quartern loaf at six-pence, in another, possibly two shillings. In one, the portion of Excise almost nothing; in another, most enormous. In the one, the possession of America; in another, the loss of it. In one, the state of Taxes, which were light, and collected constitutionally; in another, the Assessed Taxes, and the Income Tax, collected upon the principles of the Inquisition. In one, the annuitant and tradesman of 200*l.* enjoying, in the reign

of George II., every comfort which the country could afford, and living in comparative affluence; and in another, the same individual, in the reign of George III., reduced by the Income Tax to 180*l.* overwhelmed with taxes, and driven from his parlour to a garret. The Worthy Member having enumerated many other points of this nature, he said he saw no cause for illumination, but saw a great deal of folly in proposing it.

Mr. Box expressed a desire to support the honour and dignity of the City.

Mr. WAITHMAN had insuperable objections to that part of the Report which went to recommend an Illumination of the front of Guildhall, because, as the worthy Alderman had said, it would become a matter of compulsion; for if nine or ten people were to light up, every body must do it for safety, or it might cost them their lives. He considered it as a scheme for the purpose of marking out, and exposing to obloquy, those who did not join it, by holding them out as persons deficient in attachment to their Sovereign. But let the matter be discussed as it might, the Day of the Jubilee would, in reality, be a day, not of joy, but of grief at heart for the people. *None but Contractors, Jobbers, Pensioners, Placemen, or Place-hunters would feel any Joy at heart on that occasion.* It would be impossible for any reflecting man to look at the transactions of that day, without a gloomy recollection of the enormous load of debt, which pressed upon us, without feeling that that debt had been incurred for the attainment of objects, none of which had been attained. That it was professedly incurred for the security of this Country, and of the Throne itself; that both are, at this moment, less secure than they were, when our debt was only 100 instead of 800 millions.—That it is absolutely impossible for this Country to go on, upon the same scale of expenditure for the next, as the last 7 years. That out of 49 years of this reign, we have had 30 years of war; that it was owing to accident alone we had been enabled to go on so long without national bankruptcy; and that was the invention of machinery by Sir Richard Arkwright for spinning cotton, by which that article might be said to have become the staple of the country, instead of wool. Having taken notice of the mistake into which Mr. Alderman Curtis fell, as an historian, the other day, in comparing the present reign to that of Henry III. a weak and wicked Prince, whose measures were against the interest of his people, and who had even violated his Oath; when the Worthy Alderman must have meant, if he meant any thing, to have alluded to Edward III. who was, indeed, an illustrious Prince, he concluded with heartily dissenting from this Resolution.

Mr. HARPER said, that such was the general *loyalty* of the people, a general illumination would take place.

The question was put for illuminating the front of Guildhall, and carried.

The next important article to be considered was that of a DINNER.

Mr. MAWMAN then proposed his plan of dining the Corporation in the Egyptian Hall. The question was, how that was to be accomplished; and whether at the expence of the Corporation, or of the individuals who partook of it? For his part, he saw no medium between having no dinner, an idea not to be endured, and that of having it at the expence of the Corporation, because, if it was to be at the expence of the individuals who partook of it, it would be *but thinly* attended, which would be an effect much to be regretted on such an occasion!! He therefore proposed that the Corporation should dine at the Egyptian Hall in the Mansion House on that occasion, and that guests might be admitted, to a number to be limited.—[The latter part was exploded].

Mr. S. DIXON thought it had, of late, been too much the fashion to indulge gloomy apprehensions upon the state of public affairs. He saw no reason for it. He was of opinion that a day of *Jubilee* should be a day of *joy*. He had looked into dictionaries, this morning, and there he learned that a day of Jubilee was "a "day of solemn feasting, rejoicing, and "praising God." Nor did he see any inconsistency in devoting the morning to prayer, and the afternoon to a good Dinner, a glass of wine, and cheerfulness. He thought he might adore his Maker in cheerfulness as well as in gravity.

Mr. Box did not object to a Dinner, but did object to its being at the expence of the Corporation; besides, the members would better shew the sincerity of their attachment to their Sovereign, by putting their hands into their own pockets, than into those of others.

Mr. JACKS had no objection to the question of dining in the abstract, but he thought the expence would be too great for the Corporation.

Mr. KEMBLE would assent to dining, if those who dined paid for it out of their own pockets, but should object to it altogether, if at the expence of the Corporation.

Sir J. EAMER did not know of, and was unwilling to create, a precedent for the Court dining at any other than the expence of the Corporation.

Mr. VANDERCOMB saw many inconveniencies which might result from the Members of that Court dining together in a body. He did not anticipate any riot or disorder on that occasion, but should there be any, the Members of the Court would be less efficient for the purpose of quelling them, by being all at the Mansion House together, than by being in their respective Wards; and, upon such occasions, the heads of families were never better situated, than when among them, and giving directions to their servants; he was therefore against the idea of a public Dinner, which did not appear to him to be consistent with the solemnity of returning thanks to Almighty God.

Mr. KEMBLE said, that although in former days there was a good deal of intoxication at some City Dinners, there was now a great reformation in that particular, for, of late, they were so well conducted, that Members might bring their wives and daughters with them, without hurting their delicacy; of late he had not heard, at a City Feast, any conversation which he should be sorry to hear at his own table. Formerly, indeed, some persons used to become so intoxicated as to tumble under the table, but that was a practice which had been long discontinued.

Mr. DIXON bore similar testimony to modern temperance at City Feasts.

Mr. STOKES had no hesitation in saying, that if this dinner was to be at the expence of the Corporation, it would be an *absolute robbery*. "I say, an absolute robbery," said he, "for you are already so poor, as a Corporation, that you cannot pay your own servants." He referred to a fact (the particulars of which the uproar which it produced prevented us from hearing), as an illustration of his assertion.

Mr. Alderman WOOD said, that in the Committee there appeared to be a general disposition for dining: but when it was said, that it should be at the expence of individuals who partook of it, there was a visible contraction in the lineaments of the countenances of many of the Members. If there was to be a Dinner, he would recommend to the perusal of the Court, the Resolutions of the Corporation of the City of Dublin, which was—"That "the expence was to be defrayed by those "who dined—Aldermen 5, Commoners 3, "and the Guild 2 guineas."

The question was now loudly called for; and a division being demanded, strangers were directed to withdraw. Of the proceedings which followed, we can only speak from information; but we learn that a scene of tumult and confusion succeeded, of a description wholly unprecedented in the annals of Civic Debate. The Court at length divided on the grand question of a *Dinner*, or *no Dinner*, which was carried by a majority of 25 in the affirmative. A division then took place on the question, whether the expence of the Dinner should be defrayed by the Corporation, or the Members individually; when there appeared,

For the payment of the expence by Individuals, Aldermen - - - - - - - 4
Commoners - - - - - - 38—42
For dining at the expence of the Corporation, Aldermen - - - - - - 1
Commoners- - - - - 46—47
Majority against paying the money out of their own pockets, - - - - - - - - - 5.

A division afterwards took place on the question, Whether the original Ward Committee, which had made the Report, or a new Committee of the Guttling Junta, should arrange and regulate the proceedings of the Corporation in the proposed celebration of the Jubilee; the question was carried in favour of a new Committee, by a majority of 15. The naming of this Committee became a matter of extreme difficulty, and engaged the whole Court in a scene of absolute riot and confusion, which lasted till seven o'clock. The "Guttling Junta," strenuously insisted on having a Committee of Members most celebrated for eating and drinking. The Lord Mayor in vain exerted himself to restore order. The whole Court was in a state of uproar. Mr. S. Dixon, and Mr. Mawman, made about a score of harangues each. At length the Lord-Mayor, finding it impossible to restore order, dissolved the Court, so that there must, after all, be another Court of Common-Council held for the purpose of appointing this new Committee!

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